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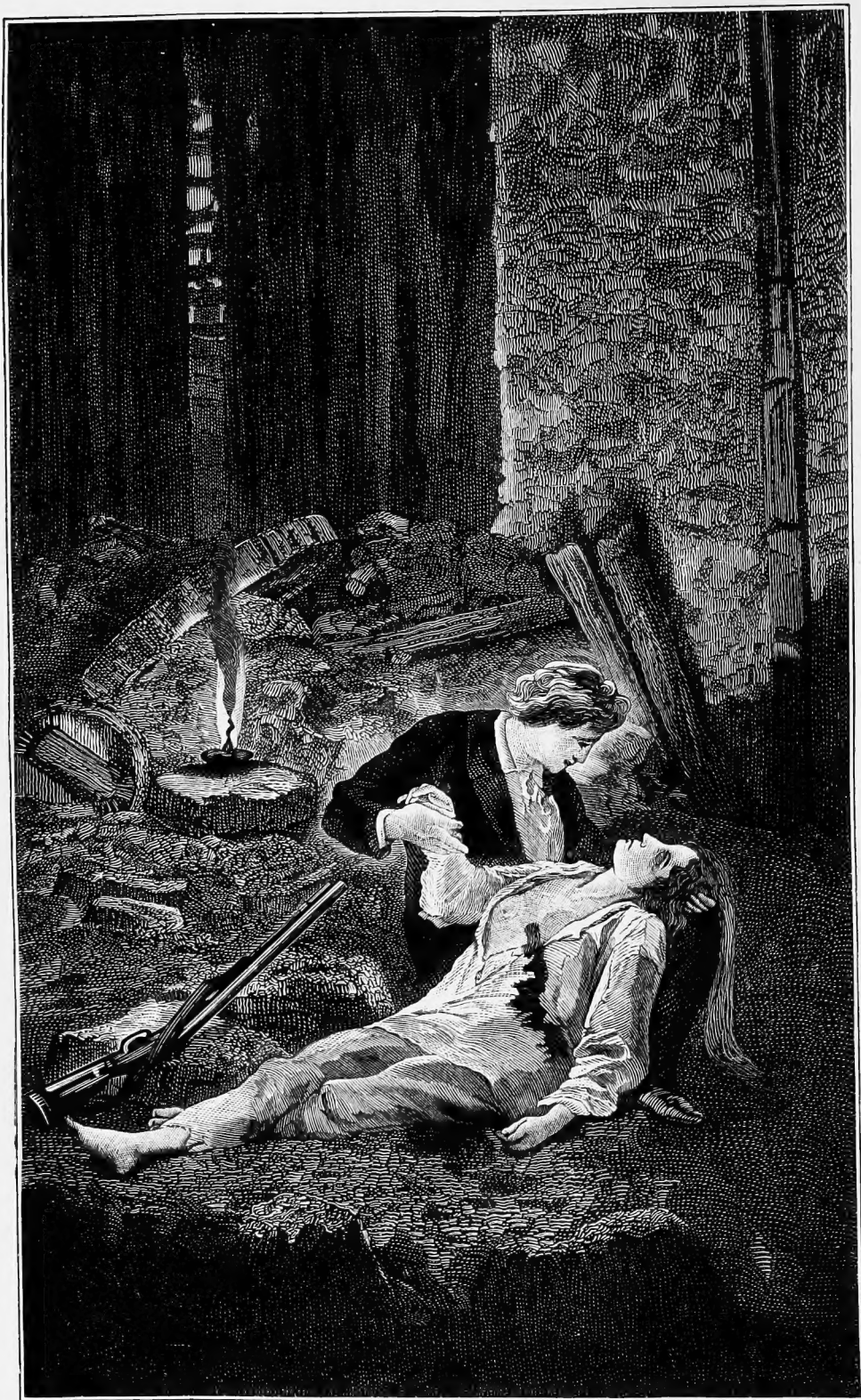
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"WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE: WHAT ARE YOU DOING."

Hugo. vol III., p. 4.







# NOVELS OF VICTOR HUGO.

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## LES MISÉRABLES.

PART TWO.

BY ORDER OF THE KING:

A ROMANCE OF ENGLISH HISTORY.

*PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED WITH ELEGANT  
WOOD ENGRAVINGS.*

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VOLUME III.

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# CONTENTS.—LES MISERABLES—VOL. III.

| CHAPTER                                                       | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| CCIII. Roots of Slang.....                                    | 5    |
| CCIV. Laughing Slang and Crying Slang.....                    | 9    |
| CCV. Two Duties. Watching and Hoping.....                     | 11   |
| CCVI. Bright Light.....                                       | 13   |
| CCVII. The Beginning of the Shadow.....                       | 15   |
| CCVIII. A Cab Runs in English and Barks in Slang.....         | 18   |
| CCIX. Marius Gives Cosette his Address.....                   | 21   |
| CCX. An Old Heart and a Young Heart Face Each Other.....      | 24   |
| CCXI. The Two Warnings.....                                   | 29   |
| CCXII. M. Mabœuf.....                                         | 31   |
| CCXIII. A Difficult Problem to Solve.....                     | 33   |
| CCXIV. A Burial Gives Opportunity for a Revival.....          | 37   |
| CCXV. The Ebullitions of other Days.....                      | 40   |
| CCXVI. Originality of Paris.....                              | 42   |
| CCXVII. Gavroche on the March.....                            | 44   |
| CCXVIII. The Old Man.....                                     | 47   |
| CCXIX. History of Corinth from its Foundation.....            | 49   |
| CCXX. Preliminary Gayeties.....                               | 52   |
| CCXXI. Preparations.....                                      | 57   |
| CCXXII. The Recruit of the Rue des Billetons.....             | 60   |
| CCXXIII. Was His Name Le Cabuc?.....                          | 62   |
| CCXXIV. From the Rue Plumet to the Rue St. Denis.....         | 64   |
| CCXXV. The Extreme Drink.....                                 | 66   |
| CCXXVI. The Flag.....                                         | 69   |
| CCXXVII. The Barrel of Gunpowder.....                         | 72   |
| CCXXVIII. The Agony of Death and the Agony of Life.....       | 74   |
| CCXXIX. Gavroche Calculates Distances.....                    | 76   |
| CCXXX. The Treacherous Blotting-book.....                     | 78   |
| CCXXXI. While Cosette Sleeps.....                             | 82   |
| CCXXXII. Gavroche's Excess of Zeal.....                       | 84   |
| CCXXXIII. The Charybdis of the Faubourg of St. Antoine.....   | 86   |
| CCXXXIV. Lights and Shadows.....                              | 90   |
| CCXXXV. Five Less and One More.....                           | 92   |
| CCXXXVI. The Prospect for a Barricade.....                    | 96   |
| CCXXXVII. The Artillery Sets to Work.....                     | 98   |
| CCXXXVIII. Dawn.....                                          | 102  |
| CCXXXIX. Passing Flashes.....                                 | 103  |
| CCXL. Gavroche Outside.....                                   | 106  |
| CCXLI. How a Brother Becomes a Father.....                    | 108  |
| CCXLII. Jean Valjean's Revenge.....                           | 112  |
| CCXLIII. The Dead Are Right and the Living Are not Wrong..... | 116  |

| CHAPTER                                                              | PAGE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| CCXLIV. The Heroes.....                                              | 120  |
| CCXLV. Foot to Foot.....                                             | 122  |
| CCXLVI. Orestes Sober and Pylades Drunk.....                         | 123  |
| CCXLVII. Prisoner!.....                                              | 125  |
| CCXLVIII. The Earth Impoverished by the Sea.....                     | 126  |
| CCXLIX. The Old History of the Sewer.....                            | 128  |
| CCL. Bruneseau.....                                                  | 129  |
| CCLI. Present Progress: Future Progress.....                         | 132  |
| CCLII. The Sewer and Its Surprises.....                              | 135  |
| CCLIII. The Tracked Man.....                                         | 139  |
| CCLIV. He Too Bears His Cross.....                                   | 141  |
| CCLV. The Fontis.....                                                | 142  |
| CCLVI. The Torn Coat-skirt.....                                      | 145  |
| CCLVII. Marius Appears Dead to a Connoisseur.....                    | 149  |
| CCLVIII. Return of the Son Prodigal of His Life.....                 | 150  |
| CCLIX. The Grandfather.....                                          | 152  |
| CCLX. The End of Javert.....                                         | 155  |
| CCLXI. In the Wood Again.....                                        | 160  |
| CCLXII. Marius Prepares for a Domestic War.....                      | 161  |
| CCLXIII. Marius Attacks.....                                         | 164  |
| CCLXIV. Mlle. Gillenormand Has no Objections to the Match.....       | 165  |
| CCLXV. The Old Men Render Cosette Happy.....                         | 168  |
| CCLXVI. Two Men Impossible to Find.....                              | 172  |
| CCLXVII. February 16, 1833.....                                      | 175  |
| CCLXVIII. Jean Valjean Still Has His Arm in a Sling.....             | 179  |
| CCLXIX. Immortale Jecur.....                                         | 183  |
| CCLXX. The Seventh Circle and the Eighth Heaven.....                 | 186  |
| CCLXXI. The Obscurity which a Revelation may Contain.....            | 194  |
| CCLXXII. The Ground-Floor Room.....                                  | 198  |
| CCLXXIII. Other Backward Steps.....                                  | 200  |
| CCLXXIV. They Remember the Garden in the Rue Plumet.....             | 201  |
| CCLXXV. Attraction and Extinction.....                               | 203  |
| CCLXXVI. Pity the Unhappy, but be Indulgent to the Rich.....         | 204  |
| CCLXXVII. A Pen is too Heavy for the Man who Saved Fauchelevent..... | 205  |
| CCLXXVIII. A Bottle of Ink which Only Whiteness.....                 | 207  |
| CCLXXIX. A Night Behind which is Day.....                            | 216  |
| CCLXXX. The Grass Hides, and the Rain Effaces.....                   | 221  |

## CONTENTS.—BY ORDER OF THE KING.

|                                                                | PAGE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Preliminary Chapter, Ursus.....                                | 222  |
| Another Preliminary Chapter. The Comprachicos.....             | 231  |
| <i>BOOK THE FIRST.</i>                                         |      |
| NIGHT NOT SO BLACK AS MAN.                                     |      |
| CHAP.                                                          |      |
| I. Portland Bill.....                                          | 238  |
| II. Left alone.....                                            | 241  |
| III. Alone.....                                                | 242  |
| IV. Questions.....                                             | 245  |
| V. The Tree of Human Invention.....                            | 245  |
| VI. Struggle between Death and Night.....                      | 247  |
| VII. The North Point of Portland.....                          | 250  |
| <i>BOOK THE SECOND.</i>                                        |      |
| THE HOOKER AT SEA.                                             |      |
| I. Superhuman Laws.....                                        | 252  |
| II. Our First Rough Sketches Filled in.....                    | 254  |
| III. Troubled Men on the Troubled Sea.....                     | 256  |
| IV. A Cloud Different from the others enters on the Scene..... | 257  |
| V. Hardquannone.....                                           | 261  |

| CHAPTER                                         | PAGE |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|
| VI. They Think that Help is at Hand.....        | 263  |
| VII. Superhuman Horrors.....                    | 265  |
| VIII. Il Et Nox.....                            | 263  |
| IX. The Charge Confided to a Raging Sea.....    | 266  |
| X. The Colossal Savage. The Storm.....          | 266  |
| XI. The Caskets.....                            | 268  |
| XII. Face to Face with the Rock.....            | 269  |
| XIII. Face to Face with Night.....              | 271  |
| XIV. Ortach.....                                | 272  |
| XV. Portentousum Mare.....                      | 272  |
| XVI. The Problem Suddenly Works in Silence..... | 274  |
| XVII. The Last Resource.....                    | 275  |
| XVIII. The Highest Resource.....                | 277  |
| <i>BOOK THE THIRD.</i>                          |      |
| THE CHILD IN THE SHADOW.                        |      |
| I. Chesil.....                                  | 280  |
| II. The Effect of Snow.....                     | 282  |
| III. A Burden Makes a Rough Road Rougher.....   | 284  |
| IV. Another Form of Desert.....                 | 286  |
| V. Misanthropy Plays its Pranks.....            | 288  |
| VI. The Awakening.....                          | 295  |

## PART I.

## BOOK THE FIRST.

THE EVERLASTING PRESENCE OF THE PAST. MAN REFLECTS  
MAN.

| CHAPTER.                                                           | PAGE. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| I. Lord Clancharlie.....                                           | 297   |
| II. Lord David Dirry-Moir.....                                     | 302   |
| III. The Duchess Josiana.....                                      | 305   |
| IV. The Leader of Fashion.....                                     | 309   |
| V. Queen Anne.....                                                 | 312   |
| VI. Barkilphedro.....                                              | 315   |
| VII. Barkilphedro Gnaws his Way.....                               | 318   |
| VIII. Inferi.....                                                  | 320   |
| IX. Hate is as Strong as Love.....                                 | 322   |
| X. The Flame which would be seen if Man were trans-<br>parent..... | 324   |
| XI. Barkilphedro in Ambuscade.....                                 | 328   |
| XII. Scotland, Ireland, and England.....                           | 330   |

## BOOK THE SECOND.

## GWYNPLAINE AND DEA.

|                                                                                    |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. Wherein we see the Face of Him whom we have<br>hitherto seen only the acts..... | 334 |
| II. Dea.....                                                                       | 336 |
| III. "Oculus Non Habet, et Viadet".....                                            | 337 |
| IV. Well-matched Lovers.....                                                       | 338 |
| V. The Blue Sky through the Black Cloud.....                                       | 339 |
| VI. Ursus as Tutor, and Ursus as Guardian.....                                     | 341 |
| VII. Blindness Gives Lessons in Clairvoyance.....                                  | 343 |
| VIII. Not only Happiness, but Prosperity.....                                      | 344 |
| IX. Absurdities which Folks without Taste Call Poetry.....                         | 347 |
| X. An Outsider's View of Men and Things.....                                       | 349 |
| XI. Gwynplaine Thinks Justice, and Ursus Talks Truth.....                          | 352 |
| XII. Ursus the Poet Drags on Ursus the Philosopher.....                            | 356 |

## BOOK THE THIRD.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE FISSURE.

|                                                                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. The Tadcaster Inn.....                                                             | 357 |
| II. Open-air Eloquence.....                                                           | 358 |
| III. Where the Passer-by Reappears.....                                               | 361 |
| IV. Contraries Fraternalize in Hate.....                                              | 363 |
| V. The Wapentake.....                                                                 | 365 |
| VI. The Mouse Examined by the Cats.....                                               | 367 |
| VII. Why Should a Gold Piece Lower Itself by mix-<br>ing with a Heap of Pennies?..... | 371 |
| VIII. Symptoms of Poisoning.....                                                      | 373 |
| IX. Abyssus Abyssum Vocat.....                                                        | 375 |

## BOOK THE FOURTH.

## THE CRILL OF TORTURE.

|                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. The Temptation of St. Gwynplaine..... | 380 |
| II. From Gay to Grave.....               | 383 |
| III. Lex, Rex, Fex.....                  | 386 |
| IV. Ursus Spies the Police.....          | 387 |

| CHAPTER                                                          | PAGE |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| V. A Fearful Place.....                                          | 390  |
| VI. The Kind of Magistracy under the Wigs of Former<br>Days..... | 390  |
| VII. Shuddering.....                                             | 392  |
| VIII. Lamentation.....                                           | 393  |

## BOOK THE FIFTH.

## THE SEA AND FATE ARE MOVED BY THE SAME BREATH.

|                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. The Durability of Fragile Things..... | 399 |
| II. The Waif Knows Its Own Course.....   | 404 |
| III. An Awakening.....                   | 409 |
| IV. Fascination.....                     | 410 |
| V. We Think We Remember; We Forget.....  | 413 |

## BOOK THE SIXTH.

## URSUS UNDER DIFFERENT ASPECTS.

|                                                                         |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. What the Misanthrope Said.....                                       | 417 |
| II. What He Did.....                                                    | 418 |
| III. Complications.....                                                 | 424 |
| IV. Mœnibus Surdis Campana Muta.....                                    | 425 |
| V. State Policy Deals with Little Matters as well as<br>with Great..... | 428 |

## BOOK THE SEVENTH.

## THE TITANESS.

|                                                     |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. The Awakening.....                               | 432 |
| II. The Resemblance of a Palace to a Wood.....      | 433 |
| III. Eve.....                                       | 434 |
| IV. Satan.....                                      | 438 |
| V. They Recognize, but do not Know, Each Other..... | 443 |

## BOOK THE EIGHTH.

## THE CAPITOL AND THINGS AROUND IT.

|                                                                  |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. Analysis of Majestic Matters.....                             | 444 |
| II. Impartiality.....                                            | 450 |
| III. The Old Hall.....                                           | 454 |
| IV. The Old Chamber.....                                         | 456 |
| V. Aristocratic Gossip.....                                      | 458 |
| VI. The High and the Low.....                                    | 462 |
| VII. Storms of Men are Worse than Storms of Oceans.....          | 464 |
| VIII. He Would Be a Good Brother, Were He not a<br>Good Son..... | 472 |

## BOOK THE NINTH.

## IN RUINS.

|                                                                                  |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. It is through Excess of Greatness that Man Reach-<br>es Excess of Misery..... | 474 |
| II. The Dregs.....                                                               | 476 |

## CONCLUSION.

## THE NIGHT AND THE SEA.

|                                                                           |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I. A Watch-dog may be a Guardian Angel.....                               | 484 |
| II. Barkilphedro, having aimed at the Eagle, brings<br>down the Dove..... | 486 |
| III. Paradise Regained Below.....                                         | 489 |
| IV. Nay; on High!.....                                                    | 492 |

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

## LES MISÉRABLES.

|                                                                            |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| The Barricade.....                                                         | 50  |
| Javert at the Post.....                                                    | 62  |
| "What Brought You Here: What are You Doing".....                           | 74  |
| At each Jolt over the Pavement a Drop of Blood fell from Marius' Hair..... | 150 |
| Jean Valjean and His Treasure Box.....                                     | 184 |
| Nearing the End.....                                                       | 188 |

## BY ORDER OF THE KING.

|                                               |     |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chaos Vanquished.....                         | 222 |
| "Cast Your Crimes Into the Sea".....          | 277 |
| Lord Clancharlie.....                         | 297 |
| Dea.....                                      | 336 |
| The Torture-chamber.....                      | 394 |
| "I Come to Awake You, Indeed".....            | 403 |
| Hardquanonne's Burial.....                    | 427 |
| "I Come," said he, "Dea, Behold I Come!"..... | 495 |



# LES MISÉRABLES.

## CHAPTER CCIII.

### ROOTS OF SLANG.

SLANG is the language of those in darkness. Thought is affected in its gloomiest depths, and social philosophy is harrassed in its most poignant undulations, in the presence of this enigmatical dialect, which is at once branded and in a state of revolt. There is in this a visible chastisement, and each syllable looks as if were marked. The words of the common language appear in it, as if branded and hardened by the hangman's red-hot irons, and some of them seem to be still smoking; some phases produce in you the effect of a robber's fleur-de-lysed shoulder suddenly exposed, and ideas almost refuse to let themselves be represented by these convict substantives. The metaphors are at times so daring that you feel that they have worn fetters. Still, in spite of all this, and in consequence of all this, this strange patois has by right its compartment in that great impartial museum, in which there is room for the oxydized sou as well as the gold medal, and which is called toleration. Slang, whether people allow it or no, has its syntax and poetry, and is a language. If, by the deforming of certain vowels, we perceive that it has been chewed by Mandrin, we feel from certain metonyms that Villon spoke it. That exquisite and so celebrated lines,

Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?

is a verse of slang. Antan—*ante annum*, is a slang word of Thunes, which signified the past year, and, by extension, formerly. Five-and-thirty years ago, on the departure of the great chain-gang, in 1827, there might be read in one of the dungeons of Bicêtre this maxim, engraved with a nail upon the wall by a king of Thunes condemned to the galleys, "les dabs d'antan trimaient siempres pour la pierre du Coësre," which means, "the kings of former days used always to go to be consecrated." In the thought of that

king, the consecration was the galleys. The word *décarade*, which expresses the departure of a heavy coach at a gallop, is attributed to Villon, and is worthy of him. This word which strikes fire, contains in a masterly onomatopœia the whole of Lafontaine's admirable line,

"Six forts chevaux tiraient un coche."

From a purely literary point of view, few studies would be more curious or fertile than that of slang. It is an entire language within a language, a sort of sickly grafting which has produced a vegetation, a parasite which has its roots in the old Gaulish trunk, and whose sinister foliage crawls up the whole of one side of the language. This is what might be called the first or common notion of slang, but to those who study the language as it should be studied, that is to say, as geologists study the earth, slang appears like a real alluvium. According as we dig more or less deeply, we find in slang, beneath the old popular French, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, Levantine, that language of the Mediterranean ports, English and German, Romanic, in its three varieties of French, Italian and Roman Latin, and, finally, Basque and Celtic. It is a deep and strange formation, a subterranean edifice built up in common by all scoundrels. Each accursed race has deposited its stratum, each suffering has let its stone fall, each heart has given its pebble. A multitude of wicked, low, or irritated souls who passed through life, and have faded away in eternity, are found there almost entire, and to some extent still visible in the shape of a monstrous word.

Do you want Spanish? the old Gothic slang swarms with it. Thus we have *boffette*, a box of the ears, which comes from *bofetón*; *vantane*, a window (afterwards *vanterne*), from *vantana*; *gat*, a cat, from *gato*; *acite*, oil, from *accyte*. Do you want Italian? we have *spade*, a sword, which comes from *spada*, and *carvel*, a boat, which comes from

*caravella*. From the English we have *bichot*, the *bishop*, *raille*, a spy, from *rascal*, and *pilche*, a case, from *pitcher*, a scabbard. Of German origin are *calner*, the waiter, from *keller*, *hers*, the master, from *herzog*, or duke. In Latin, we find *frangir*, to break, from *frangere*, *affurer*, to steal, from *fur*, and *cadène* a chain, from *catena*. There is one word which is found in all continental language with a sort of mysterious power and authority, and that is the word *magnus*; Scotland makes of it, for instance, *mac*, and slang reduces it to *muk*, afterwards *Meg*, that is to say, the Deity. Do you wish for Basque? here is *gahisto*, the devil, which is derived from *guiztoa*, bad, and *sorgabon*, good-night, which comes from *gabon*, good-evening. In Celtic we find *blavin*, a handkerchief, derived from *blavet*, running water; *menesse*, a woman (in a bad sense), from *meinc*, full of stones; *barant*, a stream, from *baranton*, a fountain; *goffeur*, a locksmith, from *goff*, a blacksmith; and *guedouze*, death which comes from *guenn-du*, white and black. Lastly, do you wish for a bit of history? Slang calls crowns "the Maltese," in memory of the change which was current abroad the Maltese galleys.

In addition to the philological origins which we have indicated, slang had other and more natural roots, which issue, so to speak, directly from the human mind. In the first place, there is a direct creation of words, for it is the mystery of language to paint with words which have, we know not how or why, faces. This is the primitive foundation of every human language, or what might be called the granite. Slang swarms with words of this nature, immediate words created all of one piece, it is impossible to say when, or by whom, without etymologies, analogies, or derivatives,—solitary, barbarous, and at times hideous words, which have a singular power of expression, and are alive. The executioner, *le taule*; the forest, *le sabri*; fear or flight, *taf*; the footman, *le larbin*; the general, prefect or minister, *pharos*; and the devil, *le rabouin*. Nothing can be stranger than these words, which form transparent masks; some of them, *le rabouin*, for instance, are at the same time grotesque and terrible, and produce the effect of a Cyclopean grimace. In the second place, there is metaphor, and it is the peculiarity of a language which wishes to say

every thing and conceal every thing to abound in figures. Metaphor is an enigma in which the robber who is scheming a plot, or the prisoner arranging an escape, takes the refuge. No idiom is more metaphorical than slang; *dévisser le coco*, to twist the neck; *tortiller*, to eat; *etre gerbé*, to be tried; *un rat*, a stealer of bread; *il lansquaine*, it rains—an old striking figure, which bears to some extent its date with it, assimilates the long oblique lines of rain to the serried sloping pikes of the lansquenets, and contains in one word the popular adage, "It is raining halberts." At times, in proportion as slang passes from the first to the second stage, words pass from the savage and primitive state to the metaphorical sense. The devil ceases to be *le rabouin*, and becomes "the baker," or he who puts in the oven. This is wittier but not so grand, something like Racine after Corneille, or Euripides after Æschylus. Some slang phrases which belong to both periods, and have at once a barbarous and a metaphorical character, resemble phantasmagorias: *Les sorqueurs vont solliciter les gails à la lune* (the prowlers are going to steal horses at night). This passes before the mind like a group of spectres, and we know not what we see. Thirdly, there is expediency; slang lives upon the language, uses it as it pleases, and when the necessity arises limits itself to denaturalizing it summarily and coarsely. At times, with the ordinary words thus deformed and complicated with pure slang, picturesque sentences are composed, in which the admission of the two previous elements, direct creation and metaphor, is visible—*le cab jaspine*, *je marronne que la roulette Pantin trime dans le sabri*, the dog barks, I suspect that the Paris diligence is passing through the wood; *le dab est sinve*, *la dabuge est merlousiere*, *lu fée est bative*, the master is stupid, the mistress is cunning, and the daughter pretty. Most frequently, in order to throw out listeners, slang confines itself to adding indistinctly to all the words of the language a species of ignoble tail, a termination in *aïlle*, *orgue*, *tergue*, or *uche*. Thus: *Vou ziergue trouvaille bonorgue ce gigotmuche*? Do you find that leg of mutton good? This was a remark made by Cartouche to a jailer, in order to learn whether the sum offered him for an escape suited him. The termination in *mar* has been very recently added.

Slang, being the idiom of corruption, is itself quickly corrupted. Moreover, as it always tries to hide itself so soon as it feels that it is understood, it transforms itself. Exactly opposed to all other vegetables, every sunbeam kills what it falls on in it. Hence slang is being constantly decomposed and recomposed, and this is an obscure and rapid labor which never ceases, and it makes more way in ten years than language does in ten centuries. Thus *larten* (head) becomes *lartif*, *gail* (a horse) *gaye*, *fertanche* (straw) *fertille*, *momignard* (the child) *momague*, *fiques* (clothes), *frusques*, *chique* (the church) *l'egrugeoir*, and *colabre* (the neck) *colas*. The devil is first *gahisto*, then *le rabouin*, and next the baker; a priest is the *ratichon*, and then the *sanglier*; a dagger is the *vingt-deux*, next a *surin*, and lastly a *lingre*; the police are *railles*, then *roussins*, then *marchands de lacet*, then *coqueurs*, and lastly *cognes*; the executioner is the *taule*, then *Charlot*, then the *atigeur*, and then the *becquillard*. In the seventeenth century to fight was to "take snuff," in the nineteenth it is "to have a quid in the throat," but twenty different names have passed away between these two extremes, and Cartouche would speak Hebrew to Lacenaire. All the words of this language are perpetually in flight, like the men who employ them. Still, from time to time, and owing to this very movement, the old slang reappears and becomes new again. It has its headquarters where it holds its ground: the Temple preserved the slang of the seventeenth century, and Bicêtre, when it was a prison, that of Thunes. There the termination in *anche* of the old Thuners could be heard: *Boyanches-tu?* (do you drink?), *il croyanche* (he believes). But perpetual motion does not the less remain the law. If the philosopher succeeds in momentarily fixing, for the purpose of observation, this language, which is necessarily evaporating, he falls into sorrowful and useful meditations, and no study is more efficacious or more fertile and instructive. There is not a metaphor or an etymology of slang which does not contain a lesson.

Among these men *fighting* means *pretending*: they "fight" a disease, for cunning is their strength. With them the idea of man is not separated from the idea of a shadow. Night is called *la sorgue* and man *l'orgue*: man is a derivative of night. They have

formed the habit of regarding society as an atmosphere which kills them, as a fatal force, and they talk of their health. A man arrested is a "patient;" a man sentenced is a "corpse." The most terrible thing for the prisoner within the four stone walls which form this sepulchre is a sort of freezing chastity, and hence he always calls the dungeon the *castus*. In this funereal place external life will appear under its most smiling aspect. The prisoner has irons on his feet, and you may perhaps fancy that he thinks how people walk with their feet: no, he thinks that they dance with them, hence, if he succeed in cutting through his fetters, his first idea is that he can now dance, and he calls the saw a *bastringue*. A name is a *centre*, a profound assimilation. The bandit has two heads,—the one which revolves his deeds and guides him through life, the other which he has on his shoulders on the day of his death: he calls the head which counsels him in crime, the *sorbonne*, and the one that expiates it the *tronche*. When a man has nothing but rags on his body and vice in his heart,—when he has reached that double moral and material degradation which the word *gueux* characterizes in its two significations, he is ripe for crime; he is like a well-sharpened blade: he has two edges, his distress and his villany, and hence slang does not call him a "gueux" but a *réguisé*. What is the *bagne*? a furnace of damnation, a hell, and the convict calls himself a "faggot." Lastly, what name do malefactors give to the prison? the "college." A whole penitentiary system might issue from this word.

Would you like to know whence came most of the galley songs,—those choruses called in the special vocabularies the *lirionfa*? Listen to this:

There was at the Chatelet of Paris a large, long cellar, which was eight feet below the level of the Seine. It had neither windows nor gratings, and the sole opening was the door; men could enter it, but air not. This cellar had for ceiling a stone arch, and for floor ten inches of mud; it had been paved, but, owing to the leakage of the water, the paving had rotted and fallen to pieces. Eight feet above the ground, a lone massive joist ran from one end to the other of this vault; from this joist hung at regular distances chains, three feet long, and at the end of these chains were collars. In

this cellar men condemned to the galleys were kept until the day of their departure for Toulon; they were thrust under this beam, where each had his fetters oscillating in the darkness and waiting for him. The chains, like pendant arms, and the collars, like open hands, seized these wretches by the neck; they were riveted and left there. As the chain was too short, they could not lie down; they remained motionless in this cellar, in this night, under this beam, almost hung, forced to make extraordinary efforts to reach their loaf or water-jug, with the vault above their heads and mud up to their knees, drawn and quartered by fatigue, giving way at the hips and knees, hanging on by their hands to the chain to rest themselves, only able to sleep standing, and awakened every moment by the choking of the collar;—some did not awake. To eat they were compelled to draw up their bread, which was thrown into the mud, with the heel all along the thigh to their hand. How long did they remain in this state? one month, two months, sometimes six months; one man remained a year. It was the ante-chamber of the galleys, and men were put in it for stealing a hare from the king. In this hellish sepulchre what did they? they died by inches, as a people can do in a sepulchre, and sang, which they can do in a hell, for when there is no longer hope, song remains;—in the Maltese waters, when a galley was approaching, the singing was heard before the sound of the oars. The poor poacher Survincent, who passed through the cellar-prison of the Chatelet, said, “*rhymes sustained me.*” Poetry is useless: what is the good of rhymes? In this cellar nearly all the slang songs were born, and it is from the dungeon of the Great Chatelet of Paris that comes the melancholy chorus of Montgomery’s galley: “*Timaloumisaine, timoulamison.*” Most of the songs are sad, some are gay, and one is tender:

“Icaille est le théâtre  
Du petit dardant.”\*

Do you what you will, you cannot destroy that eternal relic of man’s heart, love.

In this world of dark deeds secrets are kept, for secrets are a thing belonging to all,

\* The archer Cupid.

and with these wretches secrecy is the unity which serves as the basis of union. To break secrecy is to tear from each member of this ferocious community something of himself. To denounce, is called in the energetic language of slang “to eat the piece,” as if the denouncer took a little of the substance of each, and supported himself on a piece of the flesh of each. What is receiving a buffet? the conventional metaphor answers, “It is seeing six-and-thirty candles.” Here slang interferes and reads *camoufle* for candle; life in its ordinary language takes *camouflet* as a synonym for a box on the ears. Hence, by a sort of penetration from bottom to top, and by the aid of metaphor, that incalculable trajectory, slang ascends from the cellar to the academy, and Poulailleur saying, “I light my *camoufle*,” makes Voltaire write, “Langleviel la Beaumelle deserves a hundred *camouflets*.” Searching in slang is a discovery at every step, and the study and investigation of this strange idiom lead to the point of intersection of regular with accursed society. The robber has also his food for powder, or stealable matter in you, in me, in the first passer-by the *panfre* (*pan*, everybody). Slang is the word converted into a convict. It produces a consternation to reflect that the thinking principle of man can be hurled down so deep that it can be dragged there and bound by the obscure tyranny of fatality, and be fastened to some unknown rivets on this precipice. Alas! will no one come to the help of the human soul in this darkness? Is its destiny ever to await the mind, the liberator, the immense tamer of Pegasus and hippogriffs, the dawn-colored combatant, who descends from the azure sky between two wings, the radiant knight of the future? will it ever call in vain to its help the lance of the light of idealism? is it condemned always to look down into the gulf of evil and see closer and closer to it beneath the hideous water the demoniac head, this slaving mouth, and this serpentine undulation of claws, swellings and rings? Must it remain there without a gleam of hope, left to the horror of this formidable and vaguely-smelt approach of the monster, shuddering, with dishevelled hair, wringing its arms and eternally chained to the rock of night, like a sombre white and naked Andromeda in the darkness?

## CHAPTER CCIV.

## LAUGHING SLANG AND CRYING SLANG.

As we see, the whole of the slang, the slang of four hundred years ago, as well as that of the present day, is penetrated by that gloomy symbolic spirit which gives to every word at one moment a suffering accent, at another a menacing air: we see in it the old ferocious sorrow of those mumpers of the *Cour des Miracles*, who played at cards with packs of their own, some of which have been preserved for us. The eight of clubs, for instance, represented a tall man bearing eight enormous clover leaves, a sort of fantastic personification of the forest. At the foot of this tree could be seen a lighted fire, at which three hares were roasting a gamekeeper on a spit; and behind, over another fire, a steaming cauldron from which a dog's head emerged. Nothing can be more lugubrious than these reprisals in painting upon a pack of cards, in the face of the pyres for smugglers and the cauldron for coiners. The various forms which thought assumed in the kingdom of slang, singing, jests, and menaces, all had this impotent and crushed character. All the songs of which a few melodies have come down to us were humble and lamentable enough to draw tears. The *pègre* calls himself the poor *pègre*, for he is always the hare that hides itself, the mouse that escapes, or the bird that flies away. He hardly protests, but restricts himself to sighing, and one of his groans has reached us: *Je n'entrave que le dail comment meck, le daron des orgues, peut atiger ses mômes et ses momignards, et les locher criblant sans être atigé lui-même.* (I do not understand how God, the father of men, can torture His children, and His grandchildren, and hear them cry, without being tortured Himself.) The wretch, whenever he has time to think, makes himself little before the law and paltry before society; he lies down on his stomach, supplicates, and implores pity, and we can see that he knows himself to be in the wrong.

Toward the middle of the last century a change took place; the persons, songs, and choruses of the robbers assumed, so to speak, an insolent and jovial jesture. The *larifla* was substituted for the plaintive *maturé*, and we find in nearly all the songs of the galleys, the hulks, and the chain-gangs, a diabolical and enigmatical gayety. We hear in them that shrill and leaping chorus which seems

illuminated by a phosphorescent gleam, and appears cast into the forest by a will-o'-the-wisp playing the fife.

Mirlababi surlababo  
Mirliton ribonribette,  
Surlababi mirlababo  
Mirliton ribonribo.

They sang this while cutting a man's throat in a cellar or a thicket. It is a serious symptom that in the eighteenth century the old melancholy of three desponding classes is dissipated, and they begin to laugh; they mock the grand "meg" and the grand "Dab," and Louis XV. being given they call the king of France the Marquis de Pantin. The wretches are nearly gay, and a sort of dancing light issues from them, as if their conscience no longer weighed them down. These lamentable tribes of darkness no longer possess the despairing audacity of deeds, but the careless audacity of the mind; this is a sign that they are losing the feeling of their criminality, and finding some support, of which they are themselves ignorant, among the thinkers and dreamers. It is a sign that robbery and plunder are beginning to be filtered even into doctrines and sophisms, so as to lose a little of their ugliness, and give a good deal of it to the sophisms and the doctrine. Lastly, it is a sign of a prodigious and speedy eruption, unless some diversion arise. Let us halt here for a moment. Whom do we accuse? is it the eighteenth century? is it all philosophy? certainly not. The work of the eighteenth century is healthy and good, and the encyclopædists, with Diderot at their head, the physiocrats, under Turgot, the philosophers led by Voltaire, and the Utopists commanded by Rousseau, are four sacred legions. The immense advance of humanity toward the light is due to them, and they are the four advanced guards of the human races, going toward the four cardinal points of progress—Diderot toward the beautiful, Turgot toward the useful, Voltaire toward truth, and Rousseau toward justice. But by the side of and below the philosophers were the sophists, a venomous vegetation mingled with a healthy growth, a hemlock in the virgin forest. While the hangman was burning on the grand staircase of the Palace of Justice the grand liberating books of the age, writers now forgotten, were publishing, with the royal privilege, strangely disorganizing books, which were eagerly read by the scoun-

drels. Some of these publications, patronized, strange to say, by a prince, will be found in the "*Bibliothèque secrète.*" These facts; profound but unknown, were unnoticed on the surface, but at times the very obscurity of a fact constitutes its danger, and it is obscure because it is subterranean. Of all the writers, the one who perhaps dug the most unhealthy gallery at that day in the masses was Restif de la Bretonne.

This work, peculiar to all Europe, produced greater ravages in Germany than anywhere else. In Germany, during a certain period, which was summed up by Schiller in his famous drama of the Robbers, robbery and plunder were raised into a protest against property and labor, they appropriated certain elementary ideas, specious and false, apparently just, and in reality absurd, wrapped themselves up in these ideas, and to some extent disappeared in them, assumed an abstract name, and passed into a theoretical state, and in this way circulated among the laborious, suffering, and honest masses, without even the cognizance of the imprudent chemists who prepared the mixture, and the masses that accepted it. Whenever a fact of this nature is produced it is serious; suffering engenders passion; and while the prosperous blind themselves, or go to sleep, the hatred of the unfortunate classes kindles its torch at some sullen or ill-constituted mind, which is dreaming in a corner, and sets to work examining society. The examination of hatred is a terrible thing. Hence come, if the misfortune of the age desires it, those frightful commotions, formerly called *Jacqueries*, by the side of which purely political commotions are child's-play, and which are no longer the struggle of the oppressed with the oppressor, but the revolt of want against comfort. Everything is overthrown at such a time, and *Jacqueries* are the earthquakes of nations.

The France Revolution, that immense act of probity, cut short this peril, which was perhaps imminent in Europe toward the close of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution, which was nothing but the ideal armed with a sword, rose, and by the same sudden movement, closed the door of evil, and opened the door of good. It disengaged the question, promulgated the truth, expelled the miasma, ventilated the age, and crowned the people. We may say that it created man

a second time by giving him a second soul—justice. The nineteenth century inherits and profits by its work, and at the present day the social catastrophe which we just now indicated is simply impossible. He is a blind man who denounces it, a fool who fears it, for the Revolution is the vaccine of *Jacquerie*. Thanks to the Revolution, the social conditions are altered, and the feudal and monarchical diseases are no longer in our blood. There is no middle age left in our constitution, and we are no longer at the time when formidable internal commotions broke out, when the obscure course of a dull sound could be heard beneath the feet; when the earth thrown out from the mole-holes appeared on the surface of civilization, when the soil cracked, when the roof of caverns opened, and monstrous heads suddenly emerged from the ground. The revolutionary sense is a moral sense, and the feeling of right being developed, develops the feeling of duty. The law of all is liberty, which ends where the liberty of another man begins, according to Robespierre's admirable definition. Since 1789 the whole people has been dilated in the sublimated individual; there is no poor man who, having his right, has not his radiance; the man, dying of hunger, feels within himself the honesty of France. The dignity of the citizen is an internal armor; the man who is free is scrupulous, and the voter reigns. Hence comes incorruptibility; hence comes the abortion of unhealthy covetousness, and hence eyes heroically lowered before temptation. The revolutionary healthiness is so great, that on a day of deliverance, a 14th of July, or a 10th of August, there is no populace, and the first cry of the enlightened and progressing crowds is, "*Death to the robbers!*" Progress is an honest man, and the ideal and the absolute do not steal pocket-handkerchiefs. By whom were the carriages containing the wealth of the Tuileries escorted in 1848? by the rag-pickers of the Faubourg St. Antoine. Rags mounted guard over the treasure, and virtue rendered these mendicants splendid. In these carts, in barely-closed chests—some, indeed, still opened—there was, amid a hundred dazzling cases, that old crown of France, all made of diamonds, surmounted by the royal carbuncle and the Regent diamonds, worth thirty millions of francs; they guarded this crown with bare feet. Hence *Jacquerie* is no longer possible,



and I feel sorry for the clever men ; it is an old fear which has made its last effort, and could no longer be employed in politics. The great spring of the red spectre is now broken, and every bird is aware of the fact, the scarecrow no longer horrifies. The birds treat the mannikin familiarly, and deposit their guano upon it, and the bourgeois laugh at it.

## CHAPTER CCV.

### TWO DUTIES. WATCHING AND HOPING.

THIS being the case, is every social danger dissipated? certainly not. There is no *Jacquerie*, and society may be reassured on that side; the blood will not again rush to his head, but it must pay attention to the way in which it breathes. Apoplexy is no longer to be apprehended, but there is consumption, and social consumption is called wretchedness. People die as well when undermined as when struck by lightning. We shall never grow weary of repeating, that to think before all of the disinherited and sorrowful classes, to relieve, ventilate, enlighten, and love them, to magnificently enlarge their horizon, to lavish upon them education in every shape, to offer them the example of labor, and never that of indolence, to lessen the weight of the individual burden by increasing the notion of the universal object, to limit poverty without limiting wealth, to create vast fields of public and popular activity, to have, like *Briareus*, a hundred hands to stretch out on all sides to the crushed and the weak, to employ the collective power in opening workshops for every arm, schools for every aptitude, and laboratories for every intellect, to increase wages, diminish the toil, and balance the debit and credit, that is to say, proportion the enjoyment to the effort, and the satisfaction to the wants; in a word, to evolve from the social machine, on behalf of those who suffer and those who are ignorant, more light and more comfort,—is, and sympathetic souls must not forget it, the first of brotherly obligations, and let egotistic hearts learn the fact, the first of political necessities. And all this, we are bound to add, is only a beginning, and the true question is this, labor cannot be law without being a right. But this is not the place to dwell on such a subject.

If nature is called providence, society ought to call itself foresight. Intellectual and moral growth is no less indispensable than natural amelioration: knowledge is a viaticum; thinking is a primary necessity, and truth is nourishment, like wheat. A reason fasting for knowledge and wisdom grows thin, and we must nurse minds that do not eat quite as much as stomachs. If there be any thing more poignant than a body pining away for want of bread, it is a mind that dies of hunger for enlightenment. The whole of our progress tends toward the solution, and some day people will be stupefied. As the human race ascends, the deepest strata will naturally emerge from the zone of distress, and the effacement of wretchedness will be effected by a simple elevation of the level. People would do wrong to doubt this blessed solution. The past, we grant, is very powerful at the present hour, and is beginning again. This rejuvenescence of a dead man is surprising, and he marches straight toward us. He appears a victor, and is a conqueror; he arrives with his legion, superstitions; with his sword, despotism; with his barrier, ignorance; and during some time past he has gained his battles. He advances, he threatens, he laughs, he is at our gates. But we have no reason to despair; let us sell the field on which Hannibal is encamped, for what can we, who believe, fear? A recoil of ideas is no more possible than it is for a river to flow up a hill? But those who desire no future ought to reflect; by saying no to progress they do not condemn the future, but themselves, and they give themselves a deadly disease by inoculating themselves with the past. There is only one way of refusing tomorrow, and that is, by dying; but we wish for no death,—that of the body, as late as possible, and that of the soul, never. Yes, the sphynx will speak, and the problem will be solved; the people sketched by the eighteenth century will be finished by the nineteenth. He is an idiot who doubts it. The future, the speedy bursting into flower of universal welfare, is a divinely fatal phenomenon. Immense and combined impulsions pushing together govern human facts, and lead them all within a given time to the logical state, that is to say, to equilibrium, or in other words, to equity. A force composed of earth and heaven results from humanity and governs it; this force is a per-

former of miracles, and marvellous denouements are as easy to it as extraordinary incidents. Aided by science, which comes from man, and the event which comes from another source, it is but little frightened by those contradictions in the setting of problems, which seem to the vulgar herd impossibilities. It is no less skilful in producing a solution from the approximation of ideas than in producing instruction from the approximation of facts, and we may expect any thing and every thing from the mysterious power of progress, which, on fine days confronts the east and the west in a sepulchre, and makes the Imams hold conference with Bonaparte in the interior of the great Pyramid. In the meanwhile, there is no halt, no hesitation, no check, in the grand forward march of minds. Social philosophy is essentially the source of peace; it has for its object, and must have as result, the dissolution of passions by the study of antagonisms. It examines, scrutinizes, and analyzes, and then it recomposes; and it proceeds by the reducing process, by removing hatred from every thing.

It has more than once occurred, that a society has been sunk by the wind which is let loose on men; history is full of the shipwrecks of peoples and empires; one day, that stranger, the hurricane, passes, and carries away manners, laws, and religions. The civilizations of India, Chaldaea, Persia, Assyria, and Egypt have disappeared in turn; why? we are ignorant. What are the causes of these disasters? we do not know. Could those societies have been saved? was it any fault of their own? did they obstinately adhere to some fatal vice which destroyed them? What amount of suicide is there in these terrible deaths of a nation and a race? These are unanswerable questions, for darkness covers the condemned civilizations. They have been under water, since they sank, and we have no more to say, and it is with a species of terror that we see in the background of that sea which is called the past, and behind those gloomy waves, centuries, those immense vessels, Babylon, Nineveh, Tarsus, Thebes, and Rome, sunk by the terrific blast which blows from all the mouths of the darkness. But there was darkness then, and we have light; and if we are ignorant of the diseases of ancient civilizations,

we know the infirmities of our own, and we contemplate its beauties and lay bare its deformities. Wherever it is wounded we probe it, and at once the suffering is decided, and the study of the cause leads to the discovery of the remedy. Our civilization, the work of twenty centuries, is at once the monster and the prodigy, and is worth saving; it will be saved. To retain it is much, and to enlighten it is also something. All the labors of modern social philosophy ought to converge to this object, and the thinker of the present day has a grand duty to apply the stethoscope to civilization. We repeat it this auscultation is encouraging; and we intend to finish these few pages, which are an austere interlude in a mournful drama, by laying a stress on this encouragement. Beneath the social mortality the human imperishableness is felt, and the globe does not die, because here and there are wounds in the shape of craters, and ringworms in the shape of solfatar, and a volcano which breaks out and scatters its fires around. The diseases of the people do not kill the man.

And yet some of those who follow the social clinics shake their heads at times, and the strongest, the most tender and the most logical, have their hours of despondency. Will the future arrive? it seems as if we may almost ask this question on seeing so much terrible shadow. There is a sombre, face to face meeting of the egotists and the wretched. In the egotist we trace prejudices, the cloudiness of a caste education, appetite growing with intoxication, and prosperity that stuns, a fear of suffering which in some goes so far as an aversion from the sufferers, an implacable satisfaction, and the feeling of self so swollen that it closes the soul. In the wretched we find covetousness, envy, the hatred of seeing others successful, the profound bounds of the human wild beast at satisfaction, and hearts full of mist, sorrow, want, fatality, and impure and simple ignorance. Must we still raise our eyes to heaven? is the luminous point which we notice there one of those which die out? The ideal is frightful to look on thus lost in the depths, small, isolated, imperceptible and brilliant, but surrounded by all those great black menaces monstrously collected around it: for all that, though it is in no more danger than a star in the yawning throat of the clouds.

## CHAPTER CCVI.

## BRIGHT LIGHT.

THE reader has of course understood that Eponine, on recognizing through the railings the inhabitant of the house in the Rue Plumet, to which Magnon set her, began by keeping the bandits aloof from the house, then led Marius to it, and that after several days of ecstasy before the railings, Marius impelled by that force which attracts iron to the loadstone, and the lover toward the stones of the house in which she whom he loves resides, had eventually entered Cosette's garden, as Romeo did Juliet's. This had even been an easier task for him than for Romeo, for Romeo was obliged to escalate a wall, while Marius had merely to move one of the bars of the decrepit railing loose in its rusty setting, after the fashion of the teeth of old people. As Marius was thin he easily passed. As there never was anybody in the street, and as Marius never entered the garden save at night, he ran no risk of being seen. From that blessed and holy hour when a kiss affianced these two souls, Marius went to the garden every night. If, at this moment of her life, Cosette had fallen in love with an unscrupulous libertine, she would have been lost, for there are generous natures that surrender themselves and Cosette was one of them. One of the magnanimities of a woman is to yield, and love, at that elevation where it is absolute, is complicated by a certain celestial blindness of modesty. But what dangers you incur, you noble souls! you often give the heart and we take the body: your heart is left you, and you look at it in the darkness with a shudder. Love has no middle term: it either saves or destroys and this dilemma is the whole of human destiny. No fatality offers this dilemma of ruin or salvation more inexorably than does love, for love is life, if it be not death: it is a cradle, but also a coffin. The same feeling says yes and no in the human heart, and of all the things which God has made, the human heart is the one which evolves the most light, and alas! the most darkness. God willed it that the love which Cosette came across was one of those loves which save. So long as the month of May of that year, 1832, lasted, there were every night in this poor untrimmed garden, and under this thicket, which daily became more

fragrant and more thick, two beings composed of all the chastities and all the innocences, overflowing with all the felicities of heaven, nearer to the archangels than to man, pure, honest, intoxicated, and radiant, and who shone for each other in the darkness. It seemed to Cosette as if Marius had a crown and to Marius as if Cosette had a glory. They touched each other, they looked at each other, they took each other by the hand, they drew close to each other; but there was a distance which they never crossed. Not that they respected it, but they were ignorant of it. Marius felt a barrier in Cosette's purity, and Cosette felt a support in the loyalty of Marius. The first kiss had also been the last: since then Marius had never gone beyond touching Cosette's hand or neckhandkerchief or a curl with his lips. Cosette was to him a perfume, and not a woman and he inhaled her. She refused nothing, and he asked for nothing: Cosette was happy, and Marius satisfied. They lived in that ravishing state which might be called the bedazzlement of a soul by a soul; it was the ineffable first embrace of two virginities in the ideal, two swans meeting on the Jungfrau. At this hour of love, the hour when voluptuousness is absolutely silenced by the omnipotence of ecstasy, Marius, the pure and seraphic Marius, would have sooner been able to go home with a street-walker than raise Cosette's gown as high as her ankle. Once in the moonlight, Cosette stooped to pick up something on the ground, and her dress opened and displayed her neck. Marius turned his eyes away.

What passed between these two lovers? Nothing, they adored each other. At night, when they were there, this garden seemed a living and sacred spot. All the flowers opened around them and sent them their incense; and they opened their souls and spread them over the flowers. The wanton and vigorous vegetation quivered, full of sap and intoxication, around these two innocents, and they uttered words of love at which the trees shivered. What were the words? Nothings, and nothing more, but they were sufficient to trouble and effect all this nature. It is a magic power which it would be difficult to understand, were we to read in a book this conversation made to be carried away and dissipated like smoke beneath the leaves by the wind. Take away from these whispers

of two lovers the melody which issues from the soul, and accompanies them like a lyre, and what is left is only a shadow, and you say, "What! is it only that?" Well, yes, child's play, repetitions, laughs at nothing, absurdities, foolishness, all that is the most sublime and profound in the world! the only things which are worth the trouble of being said and being listened to. The man who has never heard, the man who has never uttered, these absurdities and poor things is an imbecile and a wicked man. Said Cosette to Marius,—

"Do you know that my name is Euphrasie?"

"Euphrasie? no, it is Cosette."

"Oh! Cosette is an ugly name, which was given me when I was little, but my real name is Euphrasie. Don't you like that name?"

"Yes, but Cosette is not ugly."

"Do you like it better than Euphrasie?"

"Well—yes."

"In that case, I like it better too. That is true, Cosette is pretty. Call me Cosette."

Another time she looked at him intently, and exclaimed,—

"You are handsome, sir, you are good-looking, you have wit, you are not at all stupid, you are much more learned than I, but I challenge you with, 'I love you.'"

And Marius fancied that he heard a strophe sung by a star. Or else she gave him a little tap, when he coughed, and said,—

"Do not cough, sir, I do not allow anybody to cough in my house without permission. It is very wrong to cough and frighten me. I wish you to be in good health, because if you were not I should be very unhappy, and what would you have me do?"

And this was simply divine.

Once Marius said to Cosette,—

"Just fancy, I supposed for awhile that your name was Ursula."

This made them laugh the whole evening. In the middle of another conversation he happened to exclaim,—

"Oh! one day at the Luxemboug, I felt disposed to settle an invalid!"

But he stopped short, and did not complete the sentence, for he would have been obliged to allude to Cosette's garter, and that was impossible. There was a strange feeling connected with the flesh, before which this immense innocent love recoiled with a sort of holy terror. Marius imagined life with

Cosette like this, without anything else; to come every evening to the Rue Plumet, remove the old complacent bar of the president's railings, sit down elbow to elbow on this bench, look through the trees at the scintillation of the commencing night, bring the fold in his trouser-knee into cohabitation with Cosette's ample skirts, to caress her thumb-nail, and to inhale the same flower in in turn forever and indefinitely. During this time the clouds passed over their heads, and each time the wind blows it carries off more of a man's thoughts than of clouds from the sky. We cannot affirm that this chaste, almost stern love was absolutely without gallantry. "Paying compliments" to her whom we love is the first way of giving caresses and an attempted semi-boldness. A compliment is something like a kiss through a veil, and pleasure puts its sweet point upon it while concealing itself. The cajoleries of Marius, all saturated with chimera, were, so to speak, of an azure blue. The birds when they fly in the direction of the angels must hear words of the same nature, still life, humanity, and the whole amount of positivism of which Marius was capable were mingled with it. It was what is said in the grotto, as a prelude to what will be said in the alcove; a lyrical effusion, the strophe and the sonnet commingled, the gentle hyperboles of cooing, all the refinements of adoration arranged in a posy, and exhaling a subtle and celestial perfume, an ineffable prattling of heart to heart.

"Oh!" Marius muttered, "how lovely you are! I dare not look at you, and that is the reason why I contemplate you. You are a grace, and I know not what is the matter with me. The hem of your dress, where the end of your slipper passes through, upsets me. And then, what an enchanting light when your thoughts become visible, for your reason astonishes me, and you appear to me for instants to be a dream. Speak, I am listening to you, and admiring you. Oh, Cosette, how strange and charming it is, I am really mad. You are adorable, and I study your feet in the microscope and your soul with the telescope."

And Cosette made answer,—

"And I love you a little more through all the time which has passed since this morning."

Questions and answers went on as they

could in this dialogue, which always agreed in the subject of love, like the elder-pith balls on the nail. Cosette's entire person was simplicity, ingenuousness, whiteness, candor, and radiance, and it might have been said of her that she was transparent. She produced on every one who saw her a sensation of April and daybreak, and she had dew in her eyes. Cosette was a condensation of the light of dawn in a woman's form. It was quite simple that Marius, as he adored, should admire. But the truth is, that this little boarding-school miss, just freshly turned out of a convent, talked with exquisite penetration, and made at times all sorts of true and delicate remarks. Her chattering was conversation, and she was never mistaken about anything, and conversed correctly. Woman feels and speaks with the infallibility which is the tender instinct of the heart. No one knows like a woman how to say things which are at once gentle and deep. Gentleness and depth, in those things the whole of woman is contained, and it is heaven. And in this perfect felicity tears welled in their eyes at every moment. A lady-bird crushed, a feather that fell from a nest, a branch of hawthorn broken, moved their pity, and then ecstasy, gently drowned by melancholy, seemed to ask for nothing better than to weep. The most sovereign symptom of love is a tenderness which becomes at times almost insupportable. And by the side of all this—for contradictions are the lightning sport of love—they were fond of laughing with a ravishing liberty, and so familiarly that, at times, they almost seemed like two lads. Still, even without these two hearts intoxicated with chastity being conscious of it, unforgettable nature is ever there, ever there with its brutal and sublime object, and whatever the innocence of souls may be, they feel in the most chaste *tête-à-tête* the mysterious and adorable distinction which separates a couple of lovers from a couple of friends.

They idolized each other. The permanent and the immutable exist; a couple love, they laugh, they make little pouts, with their lips, they intertwine their fingers, and that does not prevent eternity. Two lovers conceal themselves in a garden in the twilight, in the invisible, with the birds and the roses, they fascinate each other in the darkness with their souls which they place in their

eyes, they mutter, they whisper, and during this period immense constellations of planets fill infinity.

## CHAPTER CCVII.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE SHADOW.

COSETTE and Marius lived vaguely in the intoxication of their madness, and they did not notice the cholera which was decimating Paris in that very month. They had made as many confessions to each other as they could, but they had not extended very far beyond their names. Marius had told Cosette that he was an orphan, Pontmercy by name, a barrister by profession, and gaining a livelihood by writing things for publishers; his father was a colonel, a hero, and he, Marius, had quarrelled with his grandfather who was very rich. He also incidentally remarked that he was a baron, but this did not produce much effect on Cosette. Marius a baron? she did not understand it, and did not know what the word meant, and Marius was Marius to her. For her part, she confided to him that she had been educated at the convent of the Little Picpus, that her mother was dead, like his, that her father's name was Fauchelevent, that he was very good and gave a great deal to the poor, but was himself poor, and deprived himself of every thing, while depriving her of nothing. Strange to say, in the species of symphony which Marius had lived in since he found Cosette again, the past, even the most recent, had become so confused and distant to him that what Cosette told him completely satisfied him. He did not even dream of talking to her about the nocturnal adventure in the garret, the Thénardiens, the burning, the strange attitude and singular flight of her father. Marius momentarily forgot all this; he did not know at night what he had done in the morning, where he had breakfasted or who had spoken to him; he had a song in his ears which rendered him deaf to every other thought, and he only existed during the hours when he saw Cosette. As he was in heaven at that time, it was perfectly simple that he should forget the earth. Both of them bore languidly the undefinable weight of immaterial joys; that is the way in which those somnambulists called lovers live.

Alas! who is there that has not ex-

perienced these things? why does an hour arrive when we emerge from this azure, and why does life go on afterwards? Love almost takes the place of thought, and is an ardent forgetfulness of the rest. It is absurd to ask passion for logic, for there is no more an absolute logical concatenation in the human heart than there is a perfect geometric figure in the celestial mechanism. For Cosette and Marius nothing more existed than Marius and Cosette; the whole universe around them had fallen into a gulf, and they lived in a golden moment, with nothing before them, nothing behind them. Marius scarce remembered that Cosette had a father, and in his brain there was the effacement of bedazzlement. Of what did these lovers talk? as we have seen, of flowers, swallows, the setting sun, the rising moon, and all the important things. They had told themselves every thing except every thing, for the every thing of lovers is nothing. Of what use would it be to talk of her father, the realities, that den, those bandits, that adventure? and was it quite certain that the the nightmare existed? They were two, they adored each other, and there was only that, there was nothing else. It is probable that this evanishment of death behind us is inherent to the arrival in Paradise. Have we seen demons? are there any? have we trembled? have we suffered? we no longer know, and there is a roseate cloud over it all.

Hence these two beings lived in this way, very high up, and with all the unverisimilitude which there is in nature; neither at the nadir nor at the zenith, but between man and the seraphs, above the mud and below the æther, in the clouds; they were not so much flesh and bone as soul and ecstasy from head to foot, already too sublimated to walk on earth, and still too loaded with humanity to disappear in æther, and held in suspense like atoms which are waiting to be precipitated; apparently beyond the pale of destiny, and ignorant of that but, yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; amazed, transported, and floating at moments with a lightness sufficient for a flight in the infinitude and almost ready for the eternal departure. They slept awake in this sweetlulling; oh splendid lethargy of the real overpowered by the ideal! At times Cosette was so beautiful that Marius closed his eyes before her. The best

way of gazing at the soul is with closed eyes. Marius and Cosette did not ask themselves to what this would lead them, and looked at each other as if they had already arrived. It is a strange claim on the part of men to wish that their love should lead them somewhere. Jean Valjean suspected nothing, for Cosette, who, not quite such a dreamer as Marius, was gay, and that sufficed to render Jean Valjean happy. Cosette's thoughts, her tender pre-occupations, and the image of Marius which filled her soul, removed none of the incomparable purity of her splendid, chaste, and smiling forehead. She was at the age when the virgin wears her love as the angel wears its lily. Jean Valjean was, therefore, happy; and, besides, when two lovers understand each other, things always go well, and any third party who might trouble their love is kept in a perfect state of blindness by a small number of precautions, which are always the same with all lovers. Hence Cosette never made any objections; if he wished to take a walk, very good, my little papa, and if he stayed at home, very good, and if he wished to spend the evening with Cosette, she was enchanted. As he always went to his out-house at ten o'clock at night, on those occasions Marius did not reach the garden till after that hour, when he heard from the street Cosette opening the door. We need hardly say that Marius was never visible by day, and Jean Valjean did not even remember that Marius existed. One morning, however, he happened to say to Cosette, "Why, the back of your dress is all white!" On the previous evening Marius in a transport had pressed Cosette against the wall. Old Toussaint, who went to bed at an early hour, only thought of sleeping as soon as her work was finished, and was ignorant of every thing like Jean Valjean.

Marius never set foot in the house when he was with Cosette; they concealed themselves in a niche near the steps, so as not to be seen or heard from the street, and sat there, often contenting themselves with the sole conversation of pressing hands twenty times a minute, and gazing at the branches of the trees. At such moments, had a thunderbolt fallen within thirty feet of them, they would not have noticed it, so profoundly was the reverie of the one absorbed and plunged in the reverie of the other. It was a limpid purity, and the houses were all white, and

nearly all alike. This genus of love is a collection of lily leaves and dove's feathers. The whole garden was between them and the street, and each time that Marius came in and out he carefully restored the bar of the railings, so that no disarrangement was visible. He went away generally at midnight, and went back to Courfeyrac's lodgings. Courfeyrac said to Bahorel—

"Can you believe it? Marius returns home at present at one in the morning."

Bahorel answered,—

"What would you have? There is always a bombshell inside a seminarist."

At times Courfeyrac crossed his arms, assumed a stern air, and said to Marius—

"Young man, you are becoming irregular in your habits."

Courfeyrac, who was a practical man, was not pleased with this reflection of an invisible paradise cast on Marius; he was but little accustomed to unpublished passions, hence he grew impatient, and at times summoned Marius to return to reality. One morning he cast this admonition to him,—

"My dear fellow, you produce on me the effect at present of being a denizen of the moon, in the kingdom of dreams, the province of illusion, whose chief city is soap-bubble. Come, don't play the prude,—what is her name.

But nothing could make Marius speak, and his nails could have been dragged from him more easily than one of these three sacred syllables of which the ineffable name *Cosette* was composed. True love is luminous as the dawn, and silent as the tomb. Still Courfeyrac found this change in Marius, that his taciturnity was radiant. During the sweet month of May, Marius and Cosette knew this immense happiness—to quarrel and become reconciled, to talk for a long time, and with the most minute details, about people who did not interest them the least in the world,—a further proof that in that ravishing opera which is called love, the libretto is nothing. For Marius it was heaven to listen to Cosette talking of dress; for Cosette to listen to Marius talking politics, to listen, knee against knee, to the vehicles passing along the Rue de Babylone, to look at the same planet in space, or the same worm glistening in the grass, to be silent together, a greater pleasure still than talking, etc., etc., etc.

Still various complications were approaching. One evening Marius was going to the rendezvous along the Boulevard des Invalides; he was walking as usual with his head down, and as he was turning the corner of the Rue Plumet, he heard some one say close to him,—

"Good evening, Monsieur Marius,"

He raised his head, and recognized Eponine. This produced a singular effect; he had not once thought of this girl since the day when she led him to the Rue Plumet; he had not seen her again, and she had entirely left his mind. He had only motives to be grateful to her he owed her his present happiness, and yet it annoyed him to meet her. It is an error to believe that passion, when it is happy and pure, leads a man to a state of perfection; it leads him simply, as we have shown, to a state of forgetfulness. In this situation, man forgets to be wicked, but he also forgets to be good, and gratitude, duty, and essential and material recollections, fade away. At any other time Marius would have been very different to Eponine, but, absorbed by Cosette, he had not very clearly comprehended that this Eponine was Eponine Thénardier, and that she bore a name written in his father's will—that name to which he would have so ardently devoted himself a few months previously. We show Marius as he was, and his father himself slightly disappeared in his mind beneath the splendor of his love. Hence he replied with some embarrassment,—

"Ah, is it you, Eponine?"

"Why do you treat me so coldly? Have I done you any injury?"

"No," he answered.

Certainly he had no fault to find with her; on the contrary. Still he felt that he could not but say "you" to Eponine, now that he said "thou" to Cosette. As he remained silent, she exclaimed,—

"Tell me—"

Then she stopped, and it seemed as if words failed this creature, who was formerly so imprudent and bold. She tried to smile and could not, so continued,—

"Well?"

Then she was silent again, and looked down on the ground.

"Good night, Monsieur Marius," she suddenly said, and went away.

HUGO. VOL. III.—2



## CHAPTER CCVIII.

## A CAB RUNS IN ENGLISH AND BARKS IN SLANG.

THE next day—it was June 3rd, 1832, a date to which we draw attention owing to the grave events which were at that moment hanging over the horizon of Paris in the state of lightning-charged clouds—Marius at night-fall was following the same road as on the previous evening, with the same ravishing thoughts in his heart, when he saw between the boulevard trees. Eponine coming toward him. Two days running,—that was too much; so he sharply turned back, changed his course, and went to the Rue Plumet by the Rue Monsieur. This caused Eponine to follow him as far as the Rue Plumet, a thing she never had done before; hitherto she had contented herself with watching him as he passed along the boulevard, without attempting to meet him; last evening was the first time that she ventured to address him. Eponine followed him, then, without his suspecting it; she saw him move the railing-bar aside and step into the garden."

"Hilloh!" she said, "he enters the house."

She went up to the railing, felt the bars in turn, and easily distinguished the one which Marius had removed; and she muttered in a low voice, and with a lugubrious accent—"None of that, Lisette!"

She sat down on the stone work of the railing, close to the bar, as if she were guarding it. It was exactly at the spot where the railings joined the next wall, and there was there a dark corner, in which Eponine entirely disappeared. She remained thus for more than an hour without stirring or breathing, absorbed in thought. About ten o'clock at night, one of the two or three passers along the Rue Plumet, an old belated citizen, who was hurrying along the deserted and ill-famed street, while passing the railing, heard a dull menacing voice saying,—

"I am not surprised now that he comes every evening."

The passer-by looked around him, saw nobody, did not dare to peer into this dark corner, and felt horribly alarmed. He redoubled his speed, and was quite right in doing so for in a few minutes six men, who were walking separately, and at some distance from each other under the walls, and who might have been taken for a drunken patrol,

entered the Rue Plumet; the first who reached the railings stopped and waited for the rest, and a second after, all six were together, and began talking in whispered slang,—

"It's here," said one of them.

"Is there a dog in the garden?" another asked.

"I don't know. In any case I have brought a ball which we will make it swallow."

"Have you got some mastic to break a pane?"

"Yes."

"The railings are old," remarked the fifth man, who seemed to have the voice of a ventriloquist."

"All the better," said the second speaker, "it will make no noise when sawn, and won't be so hard to cut through."

The sixth, who had not yet opened his mouth, began examining the railings as Eponine had done an hour ago, and thus reached the bar which Marius had unfastened. Just as he was about to seize this bar, a hand suddenly emerging from the darkness, clutched his arm; he felt himself roughly thrust back, and a hoarse voice whispered to him, "There's a cab (a dog)." At the same time he saw a pale girl standing in front of him. The man had that emotion which is always produced by things unexpected; his hair stood hideously on end. Nothing is more formidable to look at than startled wild beasts. He fell back and stammered,—

"Who is this she-devil?"

"Your daughter."

It was, in truth, Eponine speaking to Thénardier. Upon her apparition, the other five men, that is to say, Claquesous, Gueulemer, Babet, Montparnasse, and Brujon, approached noiselessly, without hurry or saying a word, but with the sinister slowness peculiar to these men of the night. Some hideous tools could be distinguished in their hands, and Gueulemer held a pair of those short pincers which burglars call *fauchons*.

"Well what are you doing here? what do you want? are you mad?" Thénardier exclaimed, as far as is possible to exclaim in a whisper. "Have you come to prevent us from working?"

Eponine burst into a laugh and leapt on his neck. "I am here, my dear little pappy, because I am here; are not people allowed to

sit down in copings at present? it is you who oughtn't to be here; and what have you come to do, since it is a biscuit? I told Magnon so, and there is nothing to be done here. But embrace me, my dear pappy, it is such a time since I saw you. You are out, then!"

Thénardier tried to free himself from Eponine's arms, and growled,—

"There, there you have embraced me. Yes, I am out, and not in. Now be off."

But Eponine did not lose her hold, and redoubled her caresses.

"My dear pappy, how ever did you manage? You must have been very clever to get out of that scrape, so tell me all about it. And where is mamma? give me some news of her."

Thénardier answered,—

"She's all right. I don't know, leave me and be off, I tell you."

"I do not exactly want to go off," Eponine said with the pout of a spoiled child; "you send me away, though I haven't seen you now for four months, and I have scarce had time to embrace you."

And she caught her father again around the neck.

"Oh, come, this is a bore," said Babet.

"Make haste," said Gueulemer, "the police may pass."

The ventriloquial voice hummed,—

"Nous n'sommes pas le jour de l'an,  
A bécoter papa, maman."

Eponine turned to the five bandits:

"Why, that's Monsieur Brujon. Good evening, Monsieur Babet, good evening, Monsieur Claquesous, What, don't you know me, Monsieur Gueulemer? How are you, Montparnasse?"

"Yes, they know you, said Thénardier; "but now good night and be off; leave us alone."

"It is the hour of the foxes, and not of the chickens," said Montparnasse.

"Don't you see that we have work here?" Babet added.

Eponine took Montparnasse by the hand. "Mind," he said, "you will cut yourself, for I have an open knife."

"My dear Montparnasse," Eponine replied very gently, "confidence ought to be placed in people, and I am my father's daughter, perhaps. Monsieur Babet, Monsieur Gueulemer, I was ordered to examine into this affair."

It is remarkable that Eponine did not speak slang; ever since she had known Marius that frightful language had become impossible to her. She pressed Gueulemer's great coarse fingers in her little bony hand, which was as weak as that of a skeleton, and continued,—

"You know very well that I am no fool, and people generally believe me. I have done you a service now and then; well, I have made inquiries, and you would run a needless risk. I swear to you that there is nothing to be done in this house."

"There are lone women," said Gueulemer.

"No, they have moved away."

"Well, the candles haven't," Babet remarked, and he pointed over the trees to a light which was moving about the garret; it was Toussaint who was up so late in order to hang up some linen to dry. Eponine made a final effort.

"Well," she said, "they are very poor people, and there isn't a penny piece in the house."

"Go to the devil," cried Thénardier; "when we have turned the house topsy-turvy and placed the cellar at top, and the attics at the bottom, we will tell you what there is inside, and whether they are francs, sous or liards."

And he thrust her away that he might pass.

"My kind M. Montparnasse," Eponine said "I ask you, who are a good fellow, not to go in."

"Take care, you'll cut yourself," Montparnasse replied.

Thénardier remarked, with that decisive accent of his,—

"Decamp, fairy, and leave men to do their business."

Eponine let go Montparnasse's hand, which she had seized again, and said,—

"So you intend to enter this house?"

"A little," the ventriloquist said with a grin.

She leant against the railings, faced these six men armed to the teeth, to whom night gave demoniac faces, and said in a firm low voice,—

"Well, I will not let you!"

They stopped in stupefaction, but the ventriloquist completed his laugh. She continued,—

"Friends, listen to me, for it's now my turn to speak. If you enter this garden or touch this railing I will scream, knock at

doors, wake people; I will have you all six seized, and call the police."

"She is capable of doing it," Thénardier whispered to the ventriloquist and Brujon.

She shook her head, and added,—

"Beginning with my father."

Thénardier approached her.

"Not so close, my good man," she said.

He fell back, growling between his teeth, "Why, what is the matter? and added, "the b——."

She burst into a terrible laugh.

"As you please, but you shall not enter; but I am not the daughter of a dog, since I am the whelp of a wolf. You are six, but what do I care for that? You are men, and I am a woman. You won't frighten me, I can tell you, and you shall not enter this house because it does not please me. If you come nearer I bark, and I told you there was a dog, and I am it. I do not care a farthing for you, so go your way, for you annoy me! Go where you like, but don't come here, for I forbid it. Come on as you like, you with your knives, and I have my feet."

She advanced a step toward the bandits and said, with the same frightful laugh,—

"Confound it! I'm not frightened. This summer I shall be hungry, and this winter I shall be cold. What asses these men must be to think they can frighten a girl! Afraid of what? You have got dolls of mistresses who crawl under the bed when you talk big, but I am afraid of nothing!"

She fixed her eye on Thénardier, and said,—"Not even of you, father."

Then she continued, as she turned her spectral, blood-shot eye-balls on each of the bandits in turn,—

"What do I care whether I am picked up to-morrow on the pavement of the Rue Plumet stabbed by my father, or am found within a year in the nets of St. Cloud or on Swan's island, among old rotting corks and drowned dogs!"

| She was compelled to break off, for she was attacked by a dry cough, and her breath came from her weak, narrow chest like the death-rattle.

She continued,—

"I have only to cry out and people will come, patatras. You are six, but I am all Paris."

Thénardier moved a step toward her.

"Don't come near me," she cried.

He stopped, and said gently,—

"Well, no, I will not approach you, but do not talk so loud. Do you wish to prevent us from working, my daughter? And yet we must earn a livelihood. Do you no longer feel any affection for your father?"

"You bore me," said Eponine.

"Still we must live, we must eat—"

"Rot of hunger."

"This said, she sat down on the coping of the railings and sang—

Mon bras si dodu.  
Ma jambe bien faite  
Et le temps perdu.

She had her elbow on her knee, and her chin in her hands, and balanced her foot with a careless air. Her ragged gown displayed her thin shoulder-blades, and the neighboring lamp lit up her profile and attitude. Nothing more resolute or surprising could well be imagined. The six burglars, amazed and savage at being held in check by a girl, went under the shadow of the lamp and held council, with humiliated and furious shrugs of their shoulders. She, however, looked at them with a peaceful and stern air.

"There's something the matter with her," said Babet, "some reason for it. Can she be in love with the dog? and, yet, it's a pity to miss the affair. There are two women who live alone, an old cove who lives in a yard, and very decent curtains up to the windows, The old swell must be a Jew, and I consider the affair a good one."

"Well, do you fellows go in," Montparnasse exclaimed, "and do the trick. I will remain here with the girl, and if she stirs—"

He let the knife which he held in his hand glisten in the lamplight. Thénardier did not say a word, and seemed ready for anything they pleased. Brujon, who was a bit of an oracle, and who, as we know, "put up the job," had not yet spoken, and seemed thoughtful. He was supposed to recoil at nothing, and it was notorious that he had plundered a police-office through sheer bravado. Moreover, he wrote verses and songs, which gave him a great authority. Babet questioned him.

"Have you nothing to say, Brujon?"

Brujon remained silent for a moment, then tossed his head in several different ways, and at length decided on speaking.

"Look here. I saw this morning two sparrows fighting, and to-night I stumbled over a

quarrelsome woman: all that is bad, so let us be off."

They went away, and while doing so Montparnasse muttered,—

"No matter, if you had been agreeable I would have cut her throat."

Babet replied,—

"I wouldn't, for I never strike a lady."

At the corner of the street they stopped and exchanged in a low voice this enigmatical dialogue.

"Where shall we go and sleep to-night!"

"Under Paris."

"Have you your key about you, Thénardier?"

"Of course."

Eponine, who did not take her eyes off them, saw them return by the road along which they had come. She rose and crawled after them, along the walls and the houses. She followed them thus along the boulevard; there they separated, and she saw the six men bury themselves in the darkness, where they seemed to fade away.

## CHAPTER CCIX.

### MARIUS GIVES COSETTE HIS ADDRESS.

AFTER the departure of the bandits the Rue Plumet resumed its calm, nocturnal aspect. What had just taken place in this street would not have astonished a forest, for the thickets, the coppices, the heather, the interlaced branches, and the tall grass, exist in a sombre way; the savage crowd catches glimpses there of the sudden apparitions of the invisible world. What there is below man distinguishes there through the mist what there is beyond man; and things unknown to us living beings confront each other there in the night. Bristling and savage nature is startled by certain approaches in which it seems to feel the supernatural; the forces of the shadow know each other and maintain a mysterious equilibrium between themselves. Teeth and claws fear that which is unseizable, and blood-drinking bestiality, voracious, starving appetites in search of prey, the instincts armed with nails and jaws, which have for their source and object the stomach, look at and sniff anxiously the impassive spectral lineaments prowling about in a winding-sheet or standing erect in this vaguely-rustling robe, and which seems to them to live a dead

and terrible life. These brutalities, which are only matter, have a confused fear at having to deal with the immense condensed obscurity in an unknown being. A black figure barring the passage stops the wild beast short; what comes from the cemetery intimidates and disconcerts what comes from the den; ferocious things are afraid of sinister things, and wolves recoil on coming across a ghoul.

While this sort of human-faced dog was mounting guard against the railing, and six bandits fled before a girl, Marius was by Cosette's side. The sky had never been more star-spangled and more charming, the trees more rustling, or the smell of the grass more penetrating; never had the birds fallen asleep beneath the foliage with a softer noise; never had the universal harmonies of serenity responded better to the internal music of the soul; never had Marius been more enamored, happier, or in greater ecstasy. But he had found Cosette sad, she had been crying, and her eyes were red. It was the first cloud in this admirable dream. Marius' first remark was,—

"What is the matter with you?"

And she replied,—

"I will tell you."

Then she sat down on the bench near the house, and while he took his seat, all trembling, by her side, she continued.—

"My father told me this morning to hold myself in readiness, for he had business to attend to, and we were probably going away."

Marius shuddered from head to foot. When we reach the end of life, death signifies a departure, but at the beginning, departure means death. For six weeks past Marius had slowly and gradually taken possession of Cosette; it was a perfectly ideal, but profound possession. As we have explained, in first love men take the soul long before the body; at a later date they take the body before the soul, and at times they do not take the soul at all,—the Faublas and Prudhommes add, because there, is no such thing, but the sarcasm is fortunately a blasphemy. Marius, then, possessed Cosette in the way that minds possess; but he enveloped her with his entire soul, and jealously seized her with an incredible conviction. He possessed her touch, her breath, her perfume, the deep flash of her blue eyes, the softness of her skin when he touched her hand, the charming mark which

she had on her neck, and all her thoughts. They had agreed never to sleep without dreaming of each other, and had kept their word. He, therefore, possessed all Cosette's dreams. He looked at her incessantly, and sometimes breathed on the short hairs which she had on her neck, and said to himself that there was not one of those hairs which did not belong to him. He contemplated and adored the things she wore, her bows, her bows, her cuffs, her gloves, and slippers, like sacred objects, of which he was the master. He thought that he was the lord of the small tortoiseshell combs which she had in her hair, and he said to himself, in the confused stammering of voluptuousness, that there was not a seam of her dress, not a mesh of her stockings, not a wrinkle in her bodice, which was not his. By the side of Cosette he felt close to his property, near his creature, who was at once his despot and his slave. It seemed that they had so blended their souls that, if they had wished to take them back, it would have been impossible for them to recognize them. This is mine—no, it is mine—I assure you that you are mistaken. This is really I—what you take for yourself is myself; Marius was something that formed part of Cosette, and Cosette was something that formed part of Marius. Marius felt Cosette live in him; to have Cosette, to possess Cosette, was to him not very different from breathing. It was in the midst of this faith, this intoxication, this virgin, extraordinary, and absolute possession, and this sovereignty, that the words, "We are going away," suddenly fell on him, and the stern voice of reality shouted to him, "Cosette is not thine." Marius awoke. For six weeks, as we said, he had been living out of life, and the word "depart" made him roughly re-enter it. He could not find a word to say, and Cosette merely noticed that his hands were very cold. She said to him in her turn:—

"What is the matter with you?"

He answered, in so low a voice that Cosette could scarce hear him,—

"I do not understand what you said."

She continued,—

"This morning my father told me to prepare my clothes and hold myself ready, that he would give me his linen to put in a port-manteau, that he was obliged to make a journey, that we were going away, that we must have a large trunk for myself and a

small one for him, to get all this ready within a week, and that we should probably go to England."

"Why, it is monstrous!" Marius exclaimed.

It is certain that, at this moment, in Marius' mind, no abuse of power, no violence, no abomination of the most prodigious tyrants, no deed of Busiris, Tiberius, or Henry VIII., equalled in ferocity this one,—M. Fauchelevent taking his daughter to England because he had business to attend to. He asked in a faint voice,—

"And when will you start?"

"He did not say when."

"And when will you return?"

"He did not tell me."

And Marius rose and said coldly,—

"Will you go, Cosette?"

Cosette turned to him, her beautiful eyes full of agony, and answered, with a species of wildness,—

"Where?"

"To England; will you go?"

"What can I do?" she said, clasping her hands.

"Then you will go?"

"If my father goes."

"So you are determined to go?"

Cosette seized Marius' hand, and pressed it as sole reply.

"Very well," said Marius, "in that case I shall go elsewhere."

Cosette felt the meaning of this remark even more than she comprehended it; she turned so pale that her face became white in the darkness and stammered,—

"What do you mean?"

Marius looked at her, then slowly raised his eyes to heaven, and replied,—

"Nothing."

When he looked down again he saw Cosette smiling at him; the smile of the woman whom we love has a brilliancy which is visible at night.

"How foolish we are! Marius, I have an idea."

"What is it?"

"Follow us if we go away! I will tell you whither! and you can join me where I am."

"Marius was now a thoroughly wide-awake man, and had fallen back into reality; hence he cried to Cosette,—

"Go with you! are you mad? why, it would require money and I have none! Go

to England! why I already owe more than ten louis to Courfeyrac, one of my friends, whom you do not know! I have an old hat, which is not worth three francs, a coat with buttons missing in front, my shirt is all torn, my boots let in water, I am out at elbows, but I have not thought of it for six weeks, and did not tell you. Cosette, I am a wretch; you only see me at night and give me your love: were you to see me by day you would give me a halfpenny. Go to England! Why I have not enough to pay for the passport!"

He threw himself against a tree, with his arms over his head, and his forehead pressed to the bark, neither feeling the wood that grazed his skin nor the fever which spotted his temples, motionless and ready to fall, like the statue of despair. He remained for a long time in this state—people would remain for an eternity in such abysses. At length he turned and heard behind a little stifled, soft, and sad sound; it was Cosette sobbing; she had been crying for more than two hours by the side of Marius, who was reflecting. He went up to her, fell on his knees, seized her foot, which peeped out from under her skirt, and kissed it. She let him do so in silence, for there are moments when woman accepts, like a sombre and resigned duty, the worship of love.

"Do not weep," he said.

She continued,—

"But I am, perhaps, going away, and you are not able to come with me."

He said, "Do you love me?"

She replied by sobbing that Paradisaic word, which is never more charming than through tears, "I adore you."

He pursued, with an accent which was an inexpressible caress,—

"Do not weep. Will you do so much for me as to check your tears?"

"Do you love me?" she said.

He took her hand.

"Cosette, I have never pledged my word of honor to any one, because it frightens me, and I feel that my father is by the side of it. Well, I pledge you, my most sacred word of honor that if you go away I shall die."

There was in the accent with which he uttered these words such a solemn and calm melancholy that Cosette trembled, and she felt that chill which is produced by the passing of a sombre and true thing. In her terror she ceased to weep.

"Now listen to me, he said; "do not expect me to-morrow."

"Why not?"

"Do not expect me till the day after."

"Oh, why?"

"You will see."

"A day without your coming!—oh, it is impossible."

"Let us sacrifice a day to have, perhaps, one whole life."

And Marius added in a low voice and aside,—“He is a man who makes no change in his habits, and he never received anybody before the evening.”

"What man are you talking about, Cosette asked.

"I? I did not say any thing."

"What do you hope for, then?"

"Wait till the day after to-morrow."

"Do you desire it?"

"Yes, Cosette."

He took her head between his two hands, as she stood on tiptoe to reach him, and tried to see his hopes in his eyes. Marius added,—

"By the bye, you must know my address, for something might happen; I live with my friend Courfeyrac, at No. 16, Rue de la Verrierie."

He felt in his pockets, took out a knife, and scratched the address on the plaster of the wall. In the meanwhile, Cosette had begun looking in his eyes again.

"Tell me your thought, Marius, for you have one. Tell it to me. Oh, tell it to me, so that I may pass a good night."

"My thought is this; it is impossible that God can wish to separate us. Expect me the day after to-morrow."

"What shall I do till then?" Cosette said.

"You are in the world, and come and go; how happy men are! but I shall remain all alone. Oh, I shall be so sad! what will you do to-morrow night, tell me?"

"I shall try something."

"In that case I shall pray to Heaven, and think of you, so that you may succeed. I will not question you any more, as you do not wish it, and you are my master. I will spend my evening in singing the song from *Euryanthe*, of which you are so fond, and which you heard one night under my shutters. But you will come early the next evening, and I shall expect you at nine o'clock exactly. I warn you. Oh, good Heaven! how sad it is that the days are so long! You

hear; I shall be in the garden as it is striking nine."

"And I too."

And without saying a word, moved by the same thought, carried away by those electric currents which place two lovers in continual communication, both intoxicated with voluptuousness, even in their grief, fell into each other's arms without noticing that their lips were joined together, while their upraised eyes, overflowing with ecstasy and full of tears, contemplated the stars. When Marius left, the street was deserted, for it was the moment when Eponine followed the bandits into the boulevard. While Marius dreamed with his head leaning against a tree an idea had crossed his mind, an idea, alas! which himself considered mad and impossible. He had formed a violent resolution.

## CHAPTER CCX.

### AN OLD HEART AND A YOUNG HEART FACE EACH OTHER.

FATHER GILLENORMAND at this period had just passed his ninety-first birthday, and still lived with his daughter at No. 6, Rue des Filles-de-Calvaire, in the old house, which was his own property. He was, it will be remembered, one of those antique old men whose age falls on without bending them, and whom even sorrow cannot bow. Still, for some time past, his daughter had said, "My father is breaking." He no longer boxed the ears of the maid-servants, or banged so violently the staircase railing where Basque kept him waiting. The revolution of July had not exasperated him for more than six months, and he had seen almost with tranquillity in the *Moniteur* this association of words. M. Humblot-Conté, Peer of France. The truth is, that the old man was filled with grief; he did not bend, he did not surrender, for that was not possible, either with his moral or physical nature; but he felt himself failing inwardly. For four years he had been awaiting Marius with a firm foot, that is really the expression, with the conviction that the cursed young scamp would ring his bell some day, and now he had begun to say to himself that Marius might remain away a little too long. It was not death that was insupportable to him, but the idea

that perhaps he might not see Marius again. This idea had never occurred to him till one day, and at present it rose before him constantly, and chilled him to death. Absence, as ever happens in natural and true feelings, had only heightened the grandfather's love for the ungrateful boy who had gone away like that, and it is on December nights, when the thermometer is almost down at zero, that people think most of the sun. M. Gillenormand was, or fancied himself, utterly incapable of taking a step toward his grandson; I would not first, he said to himself. He did not think himself at all in the wroug, but he only thought of Marius with profound tenderness, and the dumb despair of an old man who is going down in the valley of the shadows. He was beginning to lose his teeth, which added to his sorrow. M. Gillenormand, without confessing it to himself, however, for he would have been furious and ashamed of it, had never loved a mistress as he had loved Marius. He had hung up in his room, as the first thing he might see on awaking, an old portrait of his other daughter, the one who was dead, Madame de Pontmercy, taken when she was eighteen. He incessantly regarded this portrait, and happened to say one day, while gazing at it,—

"I can notice a likeness."

"To my sister?" Mlle Gillenormand remarked, "oh, certainly."

The old man added, "And to him, too."

When he was once sitting, with his knees against each other, and his eyes almost closed in a melancholy posture, his daughter ventured to say to him,—

"Father, are you still so furious against—?" She stopped, not daring to go further.

"Against whom?" he asked.

"That poor Marius."

He raised his old head, laid his thin wrinkled fist on the table, and tried, in his loudest and most irritated accent,—

"Poor Marius, you say! that gentleman is a scoundrel, a scamp, a little vain ingrate, without heart or soul, a proud and wicked man!"

And he turned away, so that his daughter might not see a tear which he had in his eyes. Three days later he interrupted a silence which had lasted four hours to say to his daughter gruffly,—

"I had had the honor of begging Made-



moiselle Gillenormand never to mention his name to me."

Aunt Gillenormand gave up all attempts, and formed this profound diagnostic; "My father was never very fond of my sister after her folly. It is clear that he detests Marius." "After her folly" meant, "since she married the colonel." Still, as may be conjectured, Mademoiselle Gillenormand failed in her attempt to substitute her favorite, the officer of lancers, in Marius' place. Theodule had met with no success, and M. Gillenormand refused to accept the *quid pro quo*; for the vacuum in the heart cannot be stopped by a bung. Theodule, on his side, while sniffing the inheritance, felt a repugnance to the duty of pleasing, and the old gentleman annoyed the lancer, while the lancer offended the old gentleman. Lieutenant Theodule was certainly gay but gossiping, frivolous but vulgar, a good liver but bad company; he had mistresses, it is true, and he talked a good deal about them, it is also true, but then he talked badly. All his qualities had a defect, and M. Gillenormand was worn out with listening to the account of the few amours he had had round his barracks in the Rue Babylone. And then Lieutenant Theodule called sometimes in uniform with the tricolor cockade, which rendered him simply impossible. M. Gillenormand eventually said to his daughter, "I have had enough of Theodule, for I care but little for a warrior in peace times. You can receive him if you like, but for my part I do not know whether I do not prefer the sabers to the trailing of sabres, and the clash of blades in a battle is less wretched, after all, than the noise of scabbards on the pavement. And, then, to throw up one's head like a king of clubs, and to lace one's self like a woman, to wear stays under a cuirass, is doubly ridiculous. When a man is a real man he keeps himself at an equal distance from braggadocio and foppishness. So keep your Theodule for yourself." Though his daughter said to him, "After all he is your grandnephew," it happened that M. Gillenormand who was grandfather to the end of his nails, was not a granduncle at all; the fact is, that as he was a man of sense and comparison, Theodule only served to make him regret Marius the more.

On the evening of June 4th, which did not prevent Father Gillenormand from hav-

ing an excellent fire in his chimney, he had dismissed his daughter, who was sewing in the adjoining room. He was alone in his apartment with the pastoral hangings, with his feet on the andirons, half enveloped in his nine-leaved Coromandel screen, sitting at a table on which two candles burned under a green shade, swallowed up in his needle-worked easy chair, and holding a book in his hand, which he was not reading. He was dressed, according to his wont, as an "Incroyable," and resembled an old portrait of Garat. This would have caused him to be followed in the streets, but whenever he went out, his daughter wrapped him up in a sort of episcopal wadded coat, which hid his clothing. At home he never wore a dressing-gown, save when he got up and went to bed. "It gives an old look," he was wont to say. Father Gillenormand was thinking of Marius bitterly and lovingly, and, as usual, bitterness gained the upper hand. His savage tenderness always ended by boiling over and turning into indignation, and he was at the stage when a man seeks to make up his mind and accept that which is to be. He was explaining to himself that there was no longer any reason for Marius' return, that if he had meant to come home he would have done so long before, and all idea of it must be given up. He tried to form the idea that it was all over, and that he should die without seeing that "gentleman" again. But his whole nature revolted, and his old paternity could not consent. "What," he said, and it was his mournful burden, "he will not come back!" and his old bald head fell on his chest, and he vaguely fixed a lamentable and irritated glance upon the ashes on his hearth. In the depth of his reverie his old servant Basque came in and asked,—

"Can you receive M. Marius, sir?"

The old man sat up, livid, and like a corpse which is roused by a galvanic shock. All his blood flowed to his heart, and he stammered,—

"M. Marius! who?"

"I do not know," Basque replied, intimidated and disconcerted by his master's air, "for I did not see him. It was Nicolette who said to me just now, 'There is a young man here, say it is M. Marius.'"

Father Gillenormand stammered in a low voice, "show him in."

And he remained in the same attitude with hanging head and eye fixed on the floor. It opened, and a young man appeared—it was Marius, who stopped in the doorway as if waiting to be asked in. His almost wretched clothes could not be seen in the obscurity produced by the shade, and only his calm, grave, but strangely sorrowful face could be distinguished. Father Gillenormand, as if stunned by stupor and joy, remained for a few minutes, seeing nothing but a brilliancy, as when an apparition rises before us. He was ready to faint, and perceived Marius through a mist. It was really he, it was really Marius! At length, after four years! He took him in entirely, so to speak, at a glance, and found him handsome, noble, distinguished, grown a thorough man, with a proper attitude and a charming air. He felt inclined to open his arms and call the boy to him, his entrails were swelled with ravishment, affectionate words welled up and overflowed his bosom. At length all this tenderness burst forth and reached his lips, and through the contrast which formed the basis of his character a harshness issued from it. He said roughly,—

“What do you want here?”

Marius replied with an embarrassed air,—

“Sir—”

Monsieur Gillenormand would have liked for Marius to throw himself into his arms, and he was dissatisfied both with Marius and himself. He felt that he was rough, and Marius cold, and it was an insupportable and irritating anxiety to the old gentleman to feel himself so tender and imploring within, and unable to be otherwise than harsh externally. His bitterness returned, and he abruptly interrupted Marius.

“In that case why do you come?”

The “in that case” meant “*if you have not come to embrace me.*” Marius gazed at his ancestor’s marble face.

“Sir—”

The old gentleman resumed in a stern voice,—

“Have you come to ask my pardon? have you recognized your error?”

He believed that he was putting Marius on the right track, and that “the boy” was going to give way. Marius trembled, for it was a disavowal of his father that was asked of him, and he lowered his eyes and replied, “No, sir.”

“Well, in that case,” the old man exclaimed impetuously, and with a sharp sorrow full of anger, “what is it you want of me?”

Marius clasped his hands, advanced a step, and said in a weak, trembling voice,—

“Take pity on me, sir.”

This word moved M. Gillenormand; had it come sooner it would have softened him, but it came too late. The old gentleman rose, and rested both hands on his cane; his lips were white, his forehead vacillated, but his lofty statue towered over the stooping Marius.

“Pity on you, sir! the young man asks pity of an old man of ninety-one. You are entering life, and I am leaving it; you go to the play, to balls, to the coffee-house, the billiard-table; you are witty, you please women, you are a pretty fellow, while I spit on my logs in the middle of summer; you are rich with the only wealth there is, while I have all the poverty of old age, infirmity, and isolation. You have your two-and-thirty teeth, a good stomach, a quick eye, strength, appetite, health, gayety, a forest of black hair, while I have not even my white hair left. I have lost my teeth, I am losing my legs, I am losing my memory, for there are three names of streets which I incessantly confound, the Rue Charlot, the Rue du Chaume, and the Rue St. Claude. Such is my state; you have a whole future before you, full of sunshine, while I am beginning to see nothing, as I have advanced so far into night. You are in love, that is a matter of course, while I am not beloved by a soul in the world, and yet you ask me for pity! By Jove, Molière forgot that. If that is the way in which you barristers jest at the palace of justice, I compliment you most sincerely upon it, for you are droll fellows.”

And the octogenarian added, in a serious and wrathful voice,—

“Well, what is it you want of me?”

“I am aware, sir,” said Marius, “that my presence here displeases you, but I have only come to ask one thing of you, and then I shall go away at once.”

“You are a fool,” the old man said; “who told you to go away?”

This was the translation of the tender words which he had at the bottom of his heart. “Ask my pardon, why don’t you? and throw your arms round my neck.” M. Gillenormand felt that Marius was going to

leave him in a few moments, that his bad reception offended him, and that his harshness expelled him; he said all this to himself, and his grief was augmented by it; as his grief immediately turned into passion and his harshness grew the greater. He had wished that Marius should understand, and Marius did not understand, which rendered the old gentleman furious. He continued,—

“What? you insulted me, your grandfather; you left my house to go the Lord knows whither; you broke your aunt’s heart; you went away to lead a bachelor’s life, of course that’s more convenient, to play the fop, come home at all hours, and amuse yourself; you have given me no sign of life, you have incurred debts without even asking me to pay them, you have been a breaker of windows and a brawler, and at the end of four years you return to my house and have nothing more to say to me than that!”

This violent way of forcing the grandson into tenderness, only produced silence on the part of Marius. M. Gillenormand folded his arms, a gesture which with him was peculiarly imperious, and bitterly addressed Marius,—

“Let us come to an end. You have come to ask something of me, you say! well, what is it? speak.”

“Sir,” said Marius, with the look of a man who feels that he is going to fall over a precipice, “I have come to ask your permission to marry.”

M. Gillenormand rang the bell, and Basque popped his head into the door.

“Send my daughter here.”

A second later, the door opened again, and Mlle. Gillenormand did not enter, but showed herself. Marius was standing silently, with drooping arms and the face of a criminal, while M. Gillenormand walked up and down the room. He turned to his daughter and said to her.—

“It is nothing. This is M. Marius, wish him good evening. This gentleman desires to marry; that will do. Be off.”

The sound of the old man’s sharp, hoarse voice announced a mighty fury raging within him. The aunt looked at Marius in terror, seemed scarce to recognize him, did not utter a syllable, and disappeared before her father’s breath, like a straw before a hurricane. In the meanwhile M. Gillenormand had

turned back and was now leaning against the mantelpiece.

“You marry! at the age of one-and-twenty! you have settled all that, and have only a permission to ask, a mere formality! Sit down, sir. Well, you have had a revolution since I had the honor of seeing you last, the Jacobins had the best of it, and you are of course pleased; are you not a republican since you became a baron? those two things go famously together, and the republic is a sauce for the barony. Are you one of the decorated of July? did you give your small aid to take the Louvre, sir? Close by, in the Rue St. Antoine, opposite the Rue des Naindières, there is a cannon-ball imbedded in the wall of a house three stories up, with the inscription, July, 28, 1830. Go and look at it, for it produces a famous effect. Ah, your friends do very pretty things! By the way, are they not erecting a fountain on the site of the Duc de Berry’s monument. So you wish to marry? May I ask without any indiscretion, who the lady is?”

He stopped, and before Marius had time to answer,, he added violently,—

“Ah! have you a profession, a fortune? how much do you earn by your trade as a lawyer?”

“Nothing,” said Marius, with a sort of fierceness and almost stern resolution.

“Nothing? then you have only the twelve hundred livres which I allow you to live on?”

Marius made no reply, and M. Gillenormand continued,—

“In that case, I presume that the young lady is wealthy?”

“Like myself.”

“What? no dowry?”

“No.”

“Any expectations?”

“I do not think so.”

“Quite naked! and what is the father?”

“I do not know.”

“And what is her name?”

“Mademoiselle Fauchelevent.”

“Mademoiselle Fauchewhat?”

“Fauchelevent.”

“Ptt!” said the old gentleman.

“Sir!” Marius exclaimed.

M. Gillenormand interrupted him, with the air of a man who is talking to himself,—

“That is it, one-and-twenty, no profession, twelve hundred livres a year, and the Baron-

ess Pontmercy will go and buy a penn'orth of parsley at the greengrocer's."

"Sir," Marius replied in the wildness of the last vanishing hope, "I implore you, I conjure you in Heaven's name, with clasped hands I throw myself at your feet,—sir, permit me to marry her!"

The old man burst into a sharp, melancholy laugh, through which he coughed and spoke,—

"Ah, ah, ah! you said to yourself, 'I'll go and see that old periwig, that absurd ass! What a pity that I am not five-and-twenty yet, how I would send him a respectful summons! Old fool, you are too glad to see me, I feel inclined to marry Miss Lord-knows-who, the daughter of M. Lord-knows-what. She has no shoes, and I have no shirt, that matches; I am inclined to throw into the river my career, my youth, my future, my life, and take a plunge into wretchedness with a wife round my neck—that is my idea, and you must consent;' and the old fossil will consent. Go in, my lad, fasten your paving-stone round your neck, marry your Poussévent, your Coupevent—never, sir, never!"

"Father—"

"Never!"

Marius lost all hope through the accent with which this "never" was pronounced. He crossed the room slowly, with hanging head, tottering, and more like a man that is dying than one who is going away. M. Gillenormand looked after him, and at the moment when the door opened and Marius was about to leave the room he took four strides with the senile vivacity of an impetuous and spoiled old man, seized Marius by the collar, pulled him back energetically into the room, threw him into an easy chair and said,—

"Tell me all about it."

The word *father* which had escaped from Marius' lips produced this revolution. Marius looked at M. Gillenormand haggardly, but his inflexible face expressed nought now but a rough and ineffable goodness. The ancestor had made way for the grandfather.

"Well, speak; tell me of your love episodes, tell me all. Sapristi how stupid young men are!"

"My father!" Marius resumed.

The old gentleman's entire face was lit up with an indescribable radiance.

"Yes, that is it, call me father, and you'll see."

There was now something so gentle, so good, so open, and so paternal, in this sharpness, that Marius, in this sudden passage from discouragement to hope, was, as it were, stunned and intoxicated. As he was seated near the table the light of the candles fell on his seedy attire, which Father Gillenormand studied with amazement.

"Well, father," said Marius.

"What," M. Gillenormand interrupted him, "have you really no money? You are dressed like a thief."

He felt in a drawer and pulled out a purse, which he laid on the table.

"Here are one hundred louis to buy a hat with."

"My father," Marius continued, "my kind father. If you only knew how I love her! You cannot imagine it. The first time I saw her was at the Luxembourg, where she came to walk. At the beginning I paid no great attention to her, and then I know not how it happened, but I fell in love with her. Oh! how wretched it made me. I see her now every day at her own house, and her father knows nothing about it: just fancy, they are going away, we see each other at night in the garden, her father means to take her to England, and then I said to myself, 'I will go and see my grandfather and tell him about it.' I should go mad first, I should die, I should have a brain fever, I should throw myself into the water. I must marry her, or else I shall go mad. That is the whole truth, and I do not believe that I have forgotten anything. She lives in a garden with a railing to it, in the Rue Plumet: it is on the side of the Invalides."

Father Gillenormand was sitting radiantly by Marius' side: while listening and enjoying the sound of his voice he enjoyed at the same time a lengthened pinch of snuff. At the words Rue Plumet he broke off his sniffing, and allowed the rest of the snuff to fall on his knees.

"Rue Plumet! did you say Rue Plumet? only think! Is there not a barrack down there? oh yes, of course there is: your cousin, Theodule, the officer, the lancer, told me about it—a poppet, my dear fellow, a poppet! By Jove, yes, Rue Plumet, which used formerly to be called Rue Blomet. I remember it all now, and I have heard about the little girl behind the railings in the Rue Plumet. In a garden. A Pamela. Your taste is not

bad. I am told she is very tidy. Between ourselves I believe that ass of a lancer has courted her a little, I do not exactly know how far matters have gone, but after all, that is of no consequence. Besides, there is no believing him, for he boasts. Marius! I think it very proper for a young man like you to be in love, for it becomes your age, and I would sooner have you in love than a Jacobin. I would rather know you caught by a petticoat, ay, by twenty petticoats, than by Monsieur de Robespierre. For my part, I do myself the justice of saying that, as regards sans-culottes, I never loved any but women. Pretty girls are pretty girls, hang it all! and there is no harm in that. And so she receives you behind her father's back, does she? that's all right, and I had affairs of the same sort more than once. Do you know what a man does in such cases? he does not regard the matter ferociously, he does not hurl himself into matrimony, or conclude with marriage and M. le Maire in his scarf. No, he is very stupidly a sharp fellow, and a man of common sense. Glide, mortals, but not marry. Such a young man goes to his grandfather, who is well inclined after all, and who has always a few rolls of louis in an old drawer, and he says to him, 'Grandpapa, that's how matters stand,' and grandpapa says, 'It is very simple, youth must enjoy itself, and old age be smashed up. I have been young and you will be old. All right, my lad, you will requite it to your grandson. Here are two hundred pistoles, go and amuse yourself, confound you!' that is the way in which the matter should be arranged; a man does not marry, but that is no obstacle: do you understand?"

Marius, petrified and incapable of uttering a word, shook his head in the negative. The old gentleman burst into a laugh, winked his aged eyelid, tapped him on the knee, looked at him between the eyes with a mysterious and radiant air, and said with the tenderest shrug of the shoulders possible,—

"You goose! make her your mistress!"

Marius turned pale; he had understood nothing of what his grandfather had been saying, and this maundering about the Rue Blomet, Pamela, the barracks, the lancer, had passed before Marius like a phantasmagoria. Nothing of all this could affect Cosette, who was a lily, and the old gentleman was wandering. But this derogation had resulted in a sentence which Marius understood, and which

was a mortal insult to Cosette, and the words, *make her your mistress*, passed through the stern young man's heart like a sword blade. He rose, picked up his hat which was on the ground, and walked to the door with a firm, assured step. Then he turned, gave his grandfather a low bow, drew himself up again and said,—

"Five years ago you outraged my father; to-day you outraged my wife. I have nothing more to ask of you, sir; farewell!"

Father Gillenormand, who was stupefied, opened his mouth, stretched out his arms, strove to rise, and ere he was able to utter a word, the door had closed again, and Marius had disappeared. The old gentleman remained for a few minutes motionless, and as if thunderstruck, unable to speak or breathe, as though a garrotter's hand were compressing his throat. At length he tore himself out of his easy chair, ran to the door as fast as a man can run at ninety-one, opened it, and cried,—

"Help! help!"

His daughter appeared, and then his servants; he went on with a lamentable rattle in his throat,—

"Run after him! catch him up! how did I offend him? he is mad and going away! Oh Lord, oh Lord! this time he will not return."

He went to the window which looked on the street, opened it with his old trembling hands, bent half his body out of it, while Basque and Nicolette held his skirts, and cried,—

"Marius! Marius! Marius! Marius!"

But Marius could not hear him, for at this very moment he was turning the corner of the Rue St. Louis. The nonagenarian raised his hands twice or thrice to his temples with an expression of agony, tottered back, and sank into an easy chair, pulseless, voiceless, and tearless, shaking his head and moving his lips with a stupid air, and having nothing left in his eyes or heart but a profound and gloomy rigidity which resembled night.

## CHAPTER CCXI.

### THE TWO WARNINGS.

THAT same day, about four in the afternoon, Jean Valjean was seated on one of the most solitary slopes of the Champ de Mars. Either through prudence, a desire to reflect, or simply in consequence of one of those

insensible changes of habits which gradually introduce themselves into all existences, he now went out very rarely with Cosette. He had on his workman's jacket and gray canvas trousers, and his long peaked cap concealed his face. He was at present calm and happy by Cosette's side; what had startled him and troubled him for awhile was dissipated; but, during the last week or fortnight, anxieties of a fresh nature had sprung up. One day, while walking along the boulevard he noticed Thénardier; thanks to his disguise, Thénardier did not recognize him, but after that Jean Valjean saw him several times again, and now felt a certainty that Thénardier was prowling about the quarter. This was sufficient to make him form a grand resolution, for Thénardier present was every peril at once; moreover, Paris was not quiet, and political troubles offered this inconvenience to any man who had something in his life to hide, that the police had become very restless and suspicious, and, when trying to find a man, like Pepin or Morey, might very easily discover a man like Jean Valjean. He, therefore, resolved to leave Paris, even France, and go to England; he had warned Cosette, and hoped to be off within a week. He was sitting on the slope, revolving in his mind all sorts of thoughts,—Thénardier, the police, the journey, and the difficulty of obtaining a passport. From all these points of view he was anxious; and lastly an inexplicable fact, which had just struck him, and from which he was still hot, added to his alarm. On the morning of that very day he, the only person up in the house, and walking in the garden before Cosette's shutters were opened, suddenly perceived this line on the wall, probably scratched with a nail,

16, *Rue de la Verrerie*.

It was quite recent, the lines were white on the old black mortar, and a bed of nettles at the foot of the wall was powdered with fine fresh plaster. This had probably been inscribed during the night. What was it? an address? a signal for others, or a warning for himself? In any case, it was evident that the secrecy of the garden was violated, and that strangers entered it. He remembered the strange incidents which had already alarmed the house, and his mind was at work on this subject; but he was careful not to say a word to Cosette about the line written on the wall, for fear of alarming her.

In the midst of his troubled thoughts he perceived, from a shadow which the sun threw, that some one was standing on the crest of the slope immediately behind him. He was just going to turn, when a folded paper fell on his knees, as if a hand had thrown it over his head; he opened the paper, and read these words, written in large characters, and in pencil,—

LEAVE YOUR HOUSE.

Jean Valjean rose smartly, but there was no longer any one on the slope; he looked round him, and perceived a person taller than a child and shorter than a man, dressed in a gray blouse and dust-colored cotton-velvet trousers, bestriding the parapet, and slipping down into the moat of the Champ de Mars. Jean Valjean at once went home very pensively.

Marius had left M. Gillenormand's house in a wretched state; he had gone in with very small hopes, and came out with an immense despair. However—those who have watched the beginning of the human heart will comprehend it—the lancer, the officer, the fop, cousin Theodule, had left no shadow on his mind, not the slightest. The dramatic poet might apparently hope for some complications to be produced by this revelation, so coarsely made to the grandson by the grandfather, but what the drama would gain by it truth would lose. Marius was at that age when a man believes nothing that is wrong; later comes the age when he believes everything. Suspicions are only wrinkles, and early youth has none; what upsets Othello glides over Candide. Suspect Cosette? Marius could have committed a multitude of crimes more easily. He began walking about the streets, the resource of those who suffer, and he thought of nothing which he might have remembered. At two in the morning he went to Courfeyrac's lodging, and threw himself on his mattress full dressed: it was bright sunshine when he fell asleep, with that frightful oppressive sleep which allows ideas to come and go in the brain. When he awoke he saw Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Feuilly, and Combeferre, all ready to go out, and extremely busy. Courfeyrac said to him,—

"Are you coming to General Lamarque's funeral?"

It seemed to him as if Courfeyrac were talking Chinese. He went out shortly after

them, and put in his pockets the pistols which Javert had intrusted to him at the affair of Feb. 3, and which still remained in his possession. They were still loaded, and it would be difficult to say what obscure notion he had in his brain when he took them up. The whole day he wandered about, without knowing where; it rained at times, but he did not perceive it; he bought for his dinner a half-penny roll, put it in his pocket, and forgot it. It appears that he took a bath in the Seine without being conscious of it, for there are moments when a man has a furnace under his skull, and Marius had reached one of those moments. He hoped for nothing, feared nothing now, and had taken this step since the previous day. He awaited the evening with a feverish impatience, for he had but one clear idea left, that at nine o'clock he should see Cosette. This last happiness was now his sole future, after that came the shadow. At times, while walking along the most deserted boulevards, he imagined that he could hear strange noises in Paris; then he thrust his head out of his reverie, and said,—“Can they be fighting?” At nightfall, at nine o'clock precisely, he was at the Rue Plumet, as he had promised Cosette. He had not seen her for eight-and-forty hours, he was about to see her again. Every other thought was effaced, and he only felt an extraordinary and profound joy. Those minutes in which men live ages have this sovereign and admirable thing about them, that, at the moment when they pass, they entirely occupy the heart.

Marius removed the railing and rushed into the garden. Cosette was not at the place where she usually waited for him, and he crossed the garden, and went to the niche near the terrace. “She is waiting for me there,” he said, but Cosette was not there. He raised his eyes and saw that the shutters of the house were closed; he walked round the garden, and the garden was deserted. Then he returned to the garden, and, mad with love, terrified, exasperated with grief and anxiety, he rapped at the shutters, like a master who returns home at a late hour. He rapped, he rapped again, at the risk of seeing the window open and the father’s frowning face appear, and ask him,—“What do you want?” This was nothing to what he caught a glimpse of. When he had rapped, he raised his voice, and called Cosette. “Cos-

ette!” he cried: “Cosette!” he repeated imperiously. There was no answer, and it was all over; there was no one in the garden, no one in the house. Marius fixed his desperate eyes on this mournful house, which was as black, as silent, and more empty, than a tomb. He gazed at the stone bench on which he had spent so many adorable hours by Cosette’s side; then he sat down on the garden steps, with his heart full of gentleness and resolution; he blessed his love in his heart, and said to himself that since Cosette was gone all left him was to die. All at once he heard a voice which seemed to come from the street, crying through the trees,—

“Monsieur Marius!”

He drew himself up.

“Hilloh?” he said.

“Are you there, M. Marius?”

“Yes.”

“Monsieur Marius,” the voice resumed, “your friends are waiting for you at the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrière.”

This voice was not entirely strange to him, and resembled Eponine’s rough, hoarse accents. Marius ran to the railings, pulled aside the shifting bar, passed his head through, and saw some one, who seemed to be a young man, running away in the gloaming.

## CHAPTER CCXII.

M. MABŒUF.

JEAN VALJEAN’S purse was useless to M. Mabœuf, who, in his venerable childish austerity, had not accepted the gift of the stars; he had not allowed that a star could coin itself into louis d’or, and he had not guessed that what fell from heaven came from Gavroche. Hence he carried the purse to the police commissary of the district, as a lost object, placed by the finder at the disposal of the claimants. The purse was really lost, we need hardly say that no one claimed it, and it did not help M. Mabœuf. In other respects M. Mabœuf had continued to descend: and the indigo experiments had succeeded no better at the Jardin des Plantes than in his garden of Austerlitz. The previous year he owed his housekeeper her wages, and now, as we have seen, he owed his landlord his rent. The government pawnbroker’s office



sold the copper-plates of his *Flora*, at the expiration of thirteen months, and some brazier had made stewpans of them. When his plates had disappeared, as he could no longer complete the unbound copies of his *Flora*, which he still possessed, he sold off plates and text to a second-hand bookseller as defective. Nothing was then left him of the labor of his whole life, and he began eating the money produced by the copies. When he saw that this poor resource was growing exhausted he gave up his garden, and did not attend to it; before, and long before, he had given up the two eggs and the slice of beef, which he ate from time to time, and now dined on bread and potatoes. He had sold his last articles of furniture, then everything he had in duplicate, in linen, clothes and coverlids, and then his herbals and plates; but he still had his most precious books, among them being several of great rarity, such as the "Les Quadrins Historiques de la Bible," the edition of 1560; "La Concordance des Bibles," of Pierre de Besse; "Les Marguerites de la Marguerite," of Jean de la Haye, with a dedication to the Queen of Navarre; the work on the "Duties and Dignities of an Ambassador," by the Sieur de Villiers Hotman; a "Florilegium Rabbinicum," of 1644; a "Tibullus," of 1567, with the splendid imprint "*Veneriis, in ædibus Manusianis*," and lastly a "Diogenes Laertius," printed at Lyons in 1644, in which were the famous various readings of the Vatican MS. 411 of the thirteenth century, and those of the two Venetian *codices* 393 and 394, so usefully consulted by Henri Estiennes, and all the passages in the Doric dialect, only to be found in the celebrated twelfth century MS. of the Naples library. M. Mabœuf never lit a fire in his room, and went to bed with the sun, in order not to burn a candle; it seemed as if he no longer had neighbors, for they shunned him when he went out, and he noticed it. The wretchedness of a child interests a mother, the wretchedness of a youth interests an old man, but the wretchedness of an old man interests nobody, and it is the coldest of all distresses. Still M. Mabœuf had not entirely lost his childlike serenity; his eye acquired some vivacity when it settled on his books, and he smiled when he regarded the Diogenes Laertius, which was an unique copy. His glass case was the only furniture which he had retained beyond what

was indispensable. One day Mother Plutarch said to him,—

"I have no money to buy dinner with."

What she called dinner consisted of a loaf and four or five potatoes.

"Can't you get it on credit?" said M. Mabœuf.

"You know very well that it is refused me."

M. Mabœuf opened his book-case, looked for a long time at all his books in turn, like a father obliged to decimate his children would look at them before selecting, then took one up quickly, put it under his arm and went out. He returned two hours after with nothing under his arm, laid thirty sous on the table and said,—

"You will get some dinner."

From this moment Mother Plutarch saw a dark veil, which was not raised again, settle upon the old gentleman's candid face. The next day, the next day after that, and every day, M. Mabœuf had to begin again; he went out with a book and returned with a piece of silver. As the second-hand booksellers saw that he was compelled to sell they bought for twenty sous books for which he had paid twenty francs, and frequently to the same dealers. Volume by volume his whole library passed away, and he said at times "And yet I am eighty years of age," as if he had some lurking hope that he should reach the end of his days ere he had reached the end of his books. His sorrow grew, but once he had a joy: he went out with a Robert Estienne, which he sold for thirty-five sous on the Quai Malaquais, and came home with an Aldus which he had bought for forty sous in the Rue de Grès. "I owe five sous," he said quite radiantly to Mother Plutarch, but that day he did not dine. He belonged to the Horticultural Society, and his poverty was known. The president of the society called on him, promised to speak about him to the minister of commerce and agriculture, and did so. "What do you say?" the minister exclaimed, "I should think so! an old savant! a botanist! an inoffensive man! we must do something for him." The next day M. Mabœuf received an invitation to dine with the minister, and, trembling with joy, showed the letter to Mother Plutarch. "We are saved!" he said. On the appointed day he went to the minister's, and noticed that his ragged cravat, his long, square-cut coat, and shoes

varnished with white of egg, astounded the footman. No one spoke to him, not even the minister, and at about ten in the evening while still waiting for a word, he heard the minister's wife, a handsome lady in a low-necked dress, whom he had not dared to approach, ask, "Who can that old gentleman be?" He went home a-foot at midnight through the pouring rain; he had sold an Elzevir to pay his hackney coach in going.

Every evening, before going to bed, he had fallen into the habit of reading a few pages of his Diogenes Laertius; for he knew enough of Greek to enjoy the peculiarities of the text which he possessed, and had no other joy now left him. A few weeks passed away, and all at once Mother Plutarch fell ill. There is one thing even more sad than having no money to buy bread at the baker's, and that is, not to have money to buy medicine at the chemist's. One night the doctor had ordered a most expensive potion, and then the disease grew worse, and a nurse was necessary. M. Mabœuf opened his book-case, but there was nothing left in it; the last volume had departed, and the only thing left him was the Diognese Laertius. He placed the unique copy under his arm and went out—it was June 4, 1832; he proceeded to Royol's successor at the Porte St. Jacques, and returned with one hundred francs. He placed the pile of five-franc pieces on the old servant's table, and entered his bed-room without uttering a syllable. At dawn of the next day he seated himself on the overturned post in his garden, and over the hedge he might have been seen the whole morning, motionless, with drooping head, and eyes vaguely fixed on the faded flower-beds. It rained every now and then, but the old man did not seem to notice it; but in the afternoon extraordinary noises broke out in Paris, resembling musket-shots, and the clamor of a multitude. Father Mabœuf raised his head, noticed a gardener passing, and said,—

"What is the matter?"

The gardener replied, with the spade on his back, and with the most peaceful accent,—

"It's the rebels."

"What! rebels?"

"Yes, they are fighting."

"Why are they fighting?"

"The Lord only knows," said the gardener.

"In what direction?"

"Over by the arsenal."

Father Mabœuf went into his house, took his hat, mechanically, sought for a book to place under his arm, found none, said, "Ah, it is true!" and went out with a wondering look.

## CHAPTER CCXIII.

### A DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO SOLVE.

OF what is a revolt composed? of nothing and of everything, of an electricity suddenly disengaged, of a flame which suddenly breaks out, of a wandering strength and a passing breath. This breath meets with heads that talk, brains that dream, souls that suffer, passions that burn, and miseries which yell, and carries them off with it. Whither? it is chance work; through the state, through the laws, through prosperity and the insolence of others. Irritated convictions, embittered enthusiasms, aroused indignations, martial instincts suppressed, youthful courage exalted, and generous blindness; curiosity, a taste for a change, thirst for something unexpected, the feeling which causes us to find pleasure in reading the announcement of a new piece, or on hearing the machinist's whistle; vague hatreds, rancors, disappointments, every vanity which believes that destiny has been a bankrupt to it; straightened circumstances, empty dreams, ambitions surrounded by escarpments, every man who hopes for an issue from an overthrow, and lastly, at the very bottom, the mob, that mud which takes fire—such are the elements of riot. The greatest and the most infamous, beings who prowl about beyond the pale of every thing while awaiting an opportunity, gypsies, nameless men, highway vagabonds, the men who sleep o' nights in a desert of houses with no other roof but the cold clouds of heaven, those who daily ask their bread of chance, and not of toil; the unknown men of wretchedness and nothingness, bare arms and bare feet, belong to the riot. Every man who has in his soul a secret revolt against any act of the state, of life, or of destiny, is on the border line of riot, and so soon as it appears, he begins to quiver and to feel himself lifted by the whirlwind.

Riot is a species of social atmospheric  
HUGO. VOL. III.—3

waterspout, which is suddenly formed in certain conditions of temperature, and which in its revolutions mounts, runs, thunders, tears up, razes, crushes, demolishes, and uproots, bearing with it grand and lofty natures, the strong man and the weak mind, the trunk of a tree and the wisp of straw. Woe to the man whom it carries as well as to the one it dashes at, for its breaks one against the other. It communicates to those whom it seizes a strange and extraordinary power; it fills the first comer with the force of events and converts every thing into projectiles; it makes a cannon-ball of a stone, and a general of a porter. If we may believe certain oracles of the crafty policy, a little amount of riot is desirable from the governing point of view. The system is, that riot strengthens those governments which it does not overthrow; it tries the army; it concentrates the bourgeoisie, strengthens the muscles of the police, and displays the force of the social fulcrum. It is a lesson in gymnastics, and almost a Turkish bath, and power feels better after a riot, as a man does after a rubbing down. Riot, thirty years ago, was also regarded from other stand-points. There is for every thing a theory which proclaims itself as "common sense," a mediation offered between the true and the false; explanation, admonition, and a somewhat haughty extenuation which, because it is composed of blame and apology, believes itself wisdom, and is often nothing but pedantry. An entire political school, called the "*Juste milieu*," emanated from this, and between cold water and hot water, there is the lukewarm water party. This school, with its false depth entirely superficial which dissects effects without going back to causes, scolds, from the elevation of semi-science, the agitations of the public streets.

If we listen to this school, we hear; "the riots which complicated the deeds of 1830, deprived that grand event of a portion of its purity. The revolution of July was a fine blast of the popular wind, suddenly followed by a blue sky, and the riot caused a cloudy sky to reappear, and compelled the revolution, originally so remarkable through unanimity, to degenerate into a quarrel. In the revolution of July, as in every progress produced by a jerk, there were secret fractures which riots caused to be noticed. After the revolution of July only the deliverance was

felt, but after the riots the catastrophe was felt. Every riot closes shops, depresses the funds, consternates the Stock Exchange, suspends trade, checks business, and entails bankruptcies: there is no money, trade is disconcerted, capital is withdrawn, labor is at a discount, there is fear everywhere, and counterstrokes take place in every city, whence come gulfs. It is calculated that the first day of riot costs France twenty millions of francs, the second forty, and the third sixty. Hence a riot of three days costs one hundred and twenty millions, that is to say, if we only regard the financial result, is equivalent to a disaster, shipwreck, or lost action, which might annihilate a fleet of sixty vessels of the line. Indubitably, riots, historically regarded, had their beauty; the war of the paving-stones is no less grand or pathetic than the war of thickets: in the one there is the soul of forests, in the other the heart of cities: one has Jean Chouan, the other has Jeanne. Riots lit up luridly but splendidly all the most original features of the Parisian character,—generosity, devotion, stormy gayety, students proving that bravery forms a part of intellect, the National Guard unswerving, bivouacs formed by shopkeepers, fortresses held by gamins, and contempt of death in the passers-by. Schools and legions came into collision, but, after all, there was only the difference of age between the combatants, and they are the same race; the same stoical men who die at the age of twenty for their ideas, and at forty for their families; the army, ever sad in civil wars, opposed prudence to audacity; and the riots, while manifesting the popular intrepidity, were the education of the bourgeois courage. That is all very well, but is all this worth the blood shed? And then add to the bloodshed the future darkened, progress compromised, anxiety among the better classes, honest liberals despairing, foreign absolutism delighted at these wounds dealt to revolution by itself, and the conquered of 1830 triumphing and shouting, 'Did we not say so?' Add Paris possibly aggrandized, France assuredly diminished. Add—for we must tell the whole truth—the massacres which too often dishonored the victory of order, which became ferocious, over liberty which went mad, and we must arrive at the conclusion that riots have been fatal."

Thus speaks that almost wisdom which the bourgeoisie, that almost people, are so readily contented. For our part, we regret the word riots, as being too wide, and consequently too convenient, and make a distinction between one popular movement and another; we do not ask ourselves whether a riot costs as much as a battle. In the first place, why a battle? here the question of war arises. Is war less a scourge than riot is a calamity? and, then, are all riots calamities? and even supposing that July 14th cost one hundred and twenty millions, the establishment of Philip V. in Spain cost France two billions, and even were the price equal we should prefer the 14th July. Besides, we repulse these figures, which seem reasons and are only words, and a riot being given, we examine it in itself. In all that the doctrinaire objection we have just reproduced says, the only question is about effect, and we are seeking for the cause.

There is riot, and there is insurrection; they are two passions, one of which is just, the other unjust. In democratic states, the only ones based on justice, it sometimes happens that the fraction usurps power; in that case, the whole people rises, and the necessary demand for its rights may go so far as taking up arms. In all the questions which result from collective sovereignty the war of all against the fraction is insurrection, and the attack of the fraction on the masses is a riot: according as the Tuileries contain the king or the convention they are justly or unjustly attacked. The same guns pointed at the mob are in the wrong on Aug. 14th, and in the right on the 14th Vendémiaire. Their appearance is alike, but the base is different; the Swiss defend what is false, and Bonaparte what is true. What universal suffrage has done in its liberty and its sovereignty cannot be undone by the street. It is the same in matters of pure civilization, and the instinct of the masses, clear-sighted yesterday, may be perturbed to-morrow. The same fury is legitimate against Terray and absurd against Turgot. Smashing engines, pillaging store-houses, tearing up rails, the demolition of docks, the false roads of multitude, the denial of popular justice to progress, Ramus assassinated by the scholars, and Rousseau expelled from Switzerland by stones,—all this is riot. Israel rising against Moses, Athens against

Phœon, Rome against Scipio, are riots, while Paris attacking the Bastille is insurrection. The soldiers opposing Alexander, the sailors mutinying against Christopher Columbus, are the same revolt, an impious revolt; why—because Alexander does for Asia with the sword what Columbus does for America with the compass; Alexander, like Columbus, finds a world. These gifts of a world to civilization are such increments of light, that any resistance in such a case is culpable. At times the people breaks its fidelity to itself, and the mob behave treacherously to the people. Can any thing, for instance, be stranger than the long and sanguinary protest of the false Saulniers, a legitimate chronic revolt which at the decisive moment, on the day of salvation, and in the hour of the popular victory, espouses the throne, turns into chouannerie, and from an insurrection against the government becomes a riot for it! These are gloomy masterpieces of ignorance! The false Saulniers escapes from the royal gallows, and with the noose still round his neck mounts the white cockade. "Death to the salt taxes," brings into the world, "Long live the king." The killers of St. Bartholomew, the murderers of September, the massacrers of Avignon, the assassins of Coligny, of Madame de Lamballe, the assassins of Brue, the Miquelets, the Verdets, and the Cadenettes, the Companions of Jehu, and the Chevaliers du Brassard—all this is riot. The Vendée is a grand Catholic riot. The sound of right in motion can be recognized, and it does not always come from the trembling of the overthrown masses; there are mad furies and cracked bells, and all the tocsins do not give the sound of bronze. The commotion of passions and ignorances differs from the shock of progress. Rise, if you like, but only to grow, and show me in what direction you are going, for insurrection is only possible with a forward movement. Any other uprising is bad, every violent step backwards is riot, and recoiling is an assault upon the human race. Insurrection is the outburst of the fury of truth; the paving-stones which insurrection tears up emit the spark of right, and they only leave to riot their mud. Danton rising against Louis XVI. is insurrection; Herbert against Danton is riot.

Hence it comes that if insurrection in given cases may be, as Lafayette said, the

most holy of duties, riot may be the most fatal of attacks. There is also some difference in the intensity of caloric; insurrection is often a volcano, a riot often a straw fire. Revolt, as we have said, is sometimes found in the power. Polignac is a rioter, and Camille Desmoulins is a government. At times insurrection is a resurrection. The solution of every thing by universal suffrage being an absolutely modern fact, and all history anterior to that fact being for four thousand years filled with violated right and the suffering of the peoples, each epoch of history brings with it the protest which is possible to it. Under the Cæsars there was no insurrection, but there was Juvenal, and the *fact indignatio* takes the place of the Gracchi. Under the Cæsars there is the Exile of Syene, and there is also the man of the "Annals." We will not refer to the immense Exile of Patmos, who also crushes the real world with a protest in the name of the ideal world, converts a vision into an enormous satire, and casts on Rome-Nineveh, Rome-Babylon, and Rome-Sodom, the flushing reflection of the Apocalypse. John on his rock is the sphynx on its pedestal; we cannot understand him, for he is a Jew, and writes in Hebrew, but the man who writes the Annals is a Latin, or, to speak more correctly, a Roman. As the Neros reign in the black manner, they must be painted in the same. Work produced by the graver alone would be pale, and so a concentrated biting prose must be poured into the lines. Despots are of some service to thinkers, for chained language is terrible language, and the writer doubles and triples his style when silence is imposed by a master on the people. There issues from this silence a certain mysterious fulness which filters and fixes itself in bronze in the thought. Compression in history produces conciseness in the historian, and the granitic solidity of certain celebrated prose is nothing but a pressure put on by the tyrant. Tyranny forces the writer into contraction of the diameter, which is increase of strength. The Ciceronian period, scarce sufficient for Verres, would be blunted upon a Caligula. Though there is less breadth in the sentence, there is more intensity in the blow, and Tacitus thinks with a drawn-back arm. The honesty of a great heart condensed in justice and truth is annihilating.

We must observe, by the way, that Tacitus

is not historically superimposed on Cæsar, and the Tiberii are reserved for him. Cæsar and Tacitus are two successive phenomena, whose meeting seems to be mysteriously prevented by Him who regulates the entrances and exits on the stage of centuries. Cæsar is great, Tacitus is great, and God spares these two grandeurs by not bringing them into collision. The judge, in striking Cæsar, might strike too hard and be unjust, and God does not wish that. The great wars of Africa and Spain, the Cilician pirates destroyed, civilization introduced into Gaul, Britain, and Germany—all this glory covers the Rubicon. There is in this a species of delicacy on the part of divine justice, hesitating to let loose on the illustrious usurper the formidable historian, saving Cæsar from the sentence of a Tacitus, and granting extenuating circumstances to genius. Assuredly despotism remains despotism, even under the despot of genius. There is corruption under illustrious tyrants, but the moral plague is more hideous still under infamous tyrants. In such reigns nothing veils the shame; and the producers of examples, Tacitus like Juvenal, buffet more usefully in the presence of this human race this ignominy, which has no reply to make. Rome smells worse under Vitellius than under Sylla; under Claudius and Domitian there is a deformity of baseness corresponding with the ugliness of the tyrant. The foulness of the slaves is the direct product of the despots; a miasma is extracted from these crouching consciences in which the master is reflected; the public power is unclean, heads are small, consciences flat, and souls vermin; this is the case under Caracalla, Commodus, and Heliogabalus, which from the Roman senate under Cæsar there only issues the guano smell peculiar to eagles' nests. Hence the apparently tardy arrival of Juvenal and Tacitus, for the demonstrator steps in at the hour for the experiment to be performed.

But Juvenal or Tacitus, like Isaiah in biblical times and Dante in the middle ages, is the man; riot and insurrection are the multitude, which is sometimes wrong, sometimes right. In the most general cases riot issues from a material fact, but insurrection is always a moral phenomenon. Riot is Masaniello; insurrection is Spartacus. Insurrection is related to the mind, riot to the stomach; Gaster is irritated but Gaster is

certainly not always in the wrong. In questions of famine, riot, the Buzançais one, for instance, has a true, pathetic, and just starting point, and yet it remains a riot. Why? because, though right in the abstract, it is wrong in form. Ferocious though legitimate, violent though strong, it has marched haphazard, crushing things in its passage like a blind elephant; it has left behind it the corpses of old men, women, and children, and has shed, without knowing why, the blood of the unoffending and the innocent. Feeding the people is a good end, but massacre is a bad means.

All armed protests, even the most legitimate, even August 10th and July 14th, set out with the same trouble, and before right is disengaged there are tumult and scenes. At the outset an insurrection is a riot, in the same way as the river is a torrent, and generally pours itself into that ocean, Revolution. Sometimes, however, insurrection, which has come from those lofty mountains which command the moral horizon, justice, wisdom, reason, and right, and is composed of the purest snow of the ideal, after a long fall from rock to rock, after reflecting the sky in its transparency, and being swollen by a hundred confluent in its majestic course, suddenly loses itself in some bourgeois bog, as the Rhine does in the marshes. All this belongs to the past, and the future will be different, for universal suffrage has this admirable thing about it, that it dissolves riot in its origin, and, by giving insurrection a vote, deprives it of the weapon. The disappearance of war, street wars as well as frontier wars, such is the inevitable progress, and, whatever to-day may be, peace is the to-morrow. However, the bourgeois, properly so called, makes but a slight distinction between insurrection and riot. To him every thing is sedition, pure and simple rebellion, the revolt of the dog against the master, an attempt to bite, which must be punished with the chain and the kennel, a barking, until the day when the dog's head, suddenly enlarged, stands out vaguely in the shadow with a lion's face. Then the bourgeois shouts, "Long live the people!"

This explanation given, how does the movement of 1832 stand to history? is it a riot or an insurrection? it is an insurrection. It may happen that in the course of our narrative of a formidable event we may use the

word "riot," but to only qualify surface facts, and while still maintaining the distinction between the form riot and the basis insurrection. The movement of 1832 had in its rapid explosion and mournful extinction so much grandeur that even those who only see a riot in it speak of it respectfully. To them it is like a remnant of 1830, for, as they say, excited imaginations cannot be calmed in a day, and a revolution does not stop short with a precipice, but has necessarily a few undulations before it returns to a state of peace, like a mountain in redescending to the plain. This pathetic crisis of contemporary history, which the memory of Parisians calls the "time of the riots," is assuredly a characteristic hour among the stormy hours of the age. One last word before we return to our story.

The facts which we are going to record belong to that dramatic and living reality which the historian sometimes neglects through want of time and space, but they contain, we insist upon it, life, palpitation, and human quivering. Small details, as we think we have said, are, so to speak, the foliage of great events, and are lost in the distance of history. The period called the riots abound in details of this nature, and the judicial inquiries, through other than historic reasons, have not revealed every thing, or perhaps studied it. We are, therefore, going to bring into light among the peculiarities known, and published, things which are not known and facts over which the forgetfulness of some and the death of others have passed. Most of the actors in these gigantic schemes have disappeared. On the next day they held their tongues, but we may say that we saw what we are about to narrate. We will change a few names, for history recounts and does not denounce, but we will depict true things. The nature of our book will only allow us to display one side and one episode, assuredly the least known, of the days of June 5 and 6, 1832, but we will do so in such a way that the reader will be enabled to catch a glimpse of the real face of this frightful public adventure behind the dark veil which we are about to lift.

#### CHAPTER CCXIV.

A BURIAL GIVES OPPORTUNITY FOR A REVIVAL.

IN the spring of 1832, although for three months cholera had chilled minds and cast

over their agitation a species of dull calm, Paris had been for a long time ready for a commotion. As we have said, the great city resembles a piece of artillery when it is loaded,—a spark need only fall and the gun goes off. In June, 1832, the spark was the death of General Lamarque. Lamarque was a man of renown and of action, and had displayed in succession, under the empire and the Restoration, the two braveries necessary for the two epochs, the bravery of the battlefield and the bravery of the oratorical tribune. He was eloquent as he had been valiant, and a sword was felt in his words; like Foy, his predecessor, after holding the command erect, he held liberty erect; he sat between the Left and the extreme Left, beloved by the people because he accepted the chances of the future, and beloved by the mob because he had served the emperor well. He was with Gérard and Drouet one of Napoleon's marshals *in petto*, and the hiatus of 1815 affected him like a personal insult. He hated Wellington with a direct hatred, which pleased the multitude, and for the last seventeen years, scarcely paying attention to intermediate events, he had majestically nursed his grief for Waterloo. In his dying hour he pressed to his heart a sword which the officers of the hundred days had given him, and while Napoleon died uttering the word *army*, Lamarque died pronouncing the word *country*. His death, which was expected, was feared by the people as a loss, and by the government as an opportunity. This death was a mourning, and, like every thing which is bitter, mourning may turn into revolt. This really happened on the previous evening, and on the morning of June 5th, the day fixed for the interment of Lamarque, the Faubourg St. Antoine, close to which the procession would pass, assumed a formidable aspect. This tumultuous net-work of streets was filled with rumors, and people armed themselves as they could. Carpenters carried off the bolts of their shop "to break in doors with;" one of them made a dagger of a stocking-weaver's hook, by breaking off the hook and sharpening the stump. Another in his fever "to attack" slept for three nights in his clothes. A carpenter of the name of Lombier met a mate, who asked him, "Where are you going?" "Why I have no weapon, and so I am going to my shop to fetch my compasses." "What to do?"

"I don't know," Lombier said. A porter by the name of Jacqueline arrested any working man who happened to pass, and said, "Come with me." He paid for a pint of wine, and asked, "Have you work?" "No." "Go to FilsPierre's, between the Montreuil and Charonne barrières, and you will find work." At FilsPierre's cartridges and arms were distributed. Some well-known chiefs went the rounds, that is to say, ran from one to the other to collect their followers. At Barthelemy's near the Barrière du Trône, and at Capel's, the Petit Chapeau, the drinkers accosted each other with a serious air, and could be heard saying, "Where is your pistol?" "Under my blouse; and yours?" "Under my shirt." In the Rue Traversiere, in front of Roland's workshop, and in the yard of the Burnt House, before the workshop of Bernier the tool-maker, groups stood whispering. The most ardent among them was a certain Mavot, who never stopped longer than a week at a shop, for his masters sent him away, "as they were obliged to quarrel with him every day." Mavot was killed the next day on the barricade of the Rue Menilmontant. Pretot, who was also destined to die in the struggle, seconded Mavot, and replied to the question, "What is your object?" "Insurrection." Workmen assembled on the corner of the Rue de Berry, awaiting a man of the name of Lemarin, revolutionary agent for the Faubourg St. Marceau, and passwords were exchanged almost publicly.

On June 5, then, a day of sunshine and shower, the funeral procession of General Lamarque passed through Paris with the official military pomp, somewhat increased by precautions. Two battalions with covered drums and trailing muskets, ten thousand of the National Guard with their sabres at their side, and the batteries of the artillery of the National guard escorted the coffin, the hearse was drawn by young men. The officers of the Invalides followed immediately after, bearing laurel branches, and then came a countless, agitated, and strange multitude, the sectionists of the friends of the people, the school of law, the school of medicine, refugees of all nations, Spanish, Italian, German, Polish flags, horizontal tri-color flags, every banner possible, children waving green branches, stone-cutters and carpenters out of work at this very time, and printers easy to recognize by their



paper caps, marching two and two, three and three, uttering cries, nearly all shaking sticks, and some sabres, without order, but with one soul, at one moment a mob, at another a column. Squads selected their chiefs, and a man armed with a brace of pistols, which were perfectly visible, seemed to pass others in review, whose files made way for him. On the sidewalks of the boulevards, on the branches of the trees, in the balconies, at the windows and on the roofs, there was a dense throng of men, women, and children, whose eyes were full of anxiety. An armed crowd passed, and a startled crowd looked at it; on its side government was observing, with its hand on the sword-hilt. Four squadrons of carbineers, mounted, and with their trumpeters at the head, with their cartouche boxes full, and their musketoons loaded, might be seen on the Place Louis XV., in the Pays Latin, and at the Jardin des Plantes; the municipal guard were echeloned from street to street; at the Halle-aux-Vins was a squadron of dragoons, at the Grève one half of the 12th Light Infantry, while the other half was at the Bastille; the 6th Dragoons were at the Celestins, and the court of the Louvre was crammed with artillery; all the rest of the troops were confined to barracks, without counting the regiments in the environs of Paris. The alarmed authorities held suspended over the threatening multitude twenty-four thousand soldiers in the city and thirty thousand in the suburbs.

Various rumors circulated in the procession, legitimist intrigues were talked about, and they spoke about the Duke of Reichstadt, whom God was marking for death at the very moment when the crowd designated him for emperor. A person who was never discovered announced that at appointed hours two overseers, gained over, would open to the people the gates of a small arm-factory. An enthusiasm blended with despondency was visible in the uncovered heads of most of the persons present, and here and there too in this multitude, suffering from so many violent but noble emotions, might be seen criminal faces and ignoble lips, that muttered, "Let us plunder." There are some agitations which stir up the bottom of the marsh and bring clouds of mud to the surface of the water; this is a phenomenon familiar to a well-constituted police force. The procession proceeded with feverish slowness from the

house of death along the boulevards to the Bastille. It rained at intervals, but the rain produced no effect on this crowd. Several incidents, such as the coffin carried thrice round the Vendôme column, stones thrown at the Duc de Fitzjames, who was noticed in a balcony with his hat on his head, the Gallic cock torn from a popular flag and dragged in the mud, a policeman wounded by a sword-thrust at the Porte St. Martin, an officer of the 12th Light Infantry saying aloud, "I am a republican," the Polytechnic school coming up, after forcing the gates, and the cries of "Long live the Polytechnic school!" "Long live the republic!" marked the passage of the procession. At the Bastille long formidable files of spectators, coming down from the Faubourg St. Antoine, effected their junction with the procession, and a certain terrible ebullition began to agitate the crowd. A man was heard saying to another, "You see that fellow with the red beard; he will say when it is time to fire." It seems that this red beard reappeared with the same functions in a later riot, the Quenisset, affair.

The hearse passed the Bastille, followed the canal, crossed the small bridge, and reached the esplanade of the bridge of Austerlitz, where it halted. At this moment a bird's-eye view of the crowd would have offered the appearance of a comet, whose head was on the esplanade, and whose tail was prolonged upon the boulevard as far as the Porte St. Martin. A circle was formed round the hearse, and the vast crowd was hushed. Lafayette spoke, and bade farewell to Lamarque: it was a touching and august moment,—all heads were uncovered, and all hearts beat. All at once a man on horseback, dressed in black, appeared in the middle of the group with a red flag, though others say with a pike surmounted by a red cap. Lafayette turned his head away, and Excelmans left the procession. This red flag aroused a storm and disappeared in it: from the boulevard Bourdon to the bridge of Austerlitz one of those clamours which resemble billows stirred up the multitude, and two prodigious cries were raised, "*Lamarque at the pantheon!*"—"Lafayette at the Hotel de Ville!" Young men, amid the exclamations of the crowd, began dragging Lamarque in the hearse over the bridge of Austerlitz, and Lafayette in a hackney coach along

the Quai Morland. In the crowd that surrounded and applauded Lafayette people noticed and pointed out to each other a German of the name of Ludwig Snyder, who has since died a centenarian, who also went through the campaign of 1776, and had fought at Trenton under Washington, and under Lafayette at Brandywine.

The municipal cavalry galloped along the left bank to stop the passage of the bridge, while on the right the dragoons came out of the Celestins and deployed along the Quai Morland. The people who were drawing Lafayette suddenly perceived them at a turning of the quay, and cried, "The dragoons!" The troops advanced at a walk, silently, with their pistols in the holsters, sabres undrawn, and musketoon slung with an air of gloomy expectation. Two hundred yards from the little bridge they halted, the coach in which Lafayette was went up to them, they opened their ranks to let it pass, and then closed up again. At this moment the dragoons and the crowd came in contact, and women fled in terror. What took place in this fatal minute? no one could say, for it is the dark moment when two clouds clash together. Some state that a bugle-call sounding the charge was heard on the other side of the Arsenal, others that a dragoon was stabbed with a knife by a lad. The truth is, that three shots were suddenly fired, one killing Major Cholut, the second an old deaf woman who was closing her window in the Rue Contrescarpe, while the third grazed an officer's shoulder. A woman cried, "They have begun too soon!" and all at once a squadron of dragoons were seen galloping up on the opposite side with drawn sabres, and sweeping everything before it.

At such a moment the last word is said, the tempest is unchained, stones shower, the fusillade bursts forth: many rush to the water's edge and cross the small arm of the Seine, which is now filled up: the timber-yards on isle Louviers, that ready-made citadel, bristle with combatants, stakes are pulled up, pistols are fired, a barricade is commenced, the young men driven back, pass over the bridge of Austerlitz with the hearse at the double, and charge the municipal guard: the carbineers gallop up, the dragoons sabre, the crowd disperses in all directions, a rumor of war flies to the four corners of Paris: men cry "To arms!" and run, over-

throw, fly, and resist. Passion spreads the riot as the wind does fire.

## CHAPTER CCXV.

### THE EBULLITIONS OF OTHER DAYS.

NOTHING is more extraordinary than the commencement of a riot, for every thing breaks out everywhere at once. Was it foreseen? yes. Was it prepared? no. Where does it issue from? from the pavement. Where does it fall from? the clouds. At one spot the insurrection has the character of a plot, at another of an improvisation. The first comer grasps a current of the mob and leads it whether he pleases. It is a beginning full of horror, with which a sort of formidable gayety is mingled. First there is a clamor; shops are closed, and the goods disappear from the tradesmen's windows; then dropping shots are heard; people fly; gateways are assailed with the butts of muskets, and servant-maids may be heard laughing in the yards of the houses and saying, *There's going to be a row.*

A quarter of an hour had not elapsed: this is what was going on simultaneously at twenty different points of Paris. In the Rue St. Croix de la Bretonnerie, twenty young men, with beards and long hair, entered a wine-shop and came out a moment after carrying a horizontal tri-color flag covered with crape, and having at their head three men armed, one with a sabre, the second with a gun, and the third with a pike. In the Rue des Nonaindières, a well-dressed bourgeois, who had a large stomach, a sonorous voice, bald head, lofty forehead, black beard, and one of those rough mustaches which cannot be kept from bristling, publicly offered cartridges to passers-by. In the Rue St. Pierre Montmartre bare-armed men carried about a black flag, on which were read these words, in white letters: *Republic or death.* In the Rue des Jeûneurs, Rue du Cadran, Rue Montorgueil, and Rue Mandar, groups appeared waving flags, on which could be distinguished the word *section* in gold letters with a number. One of these flags was red and blue, with an imperceptible parting line of white. A small-arm factory and the gunsmiths' shops were plundered on the boulevard St. Martin, and in a few minutes the thousand hands of the mob seized and carried

off two hundred and thirty guns, nearly all double-barrelled, sixty-four sabres, and eighty-three pistols. In order to arm as many persons as possible, one took the musket, the other the bayonet. Opposite the Quai de la Grève young men armed with muskets stationed themselves in the rooms of some ladies in order to fire; one of them had a wheel lock gun. They rang, went in and began making cartridges, and one of the ladies said afterwards, "I did not know what cartridges were till my husband told me." A crowd broke into a curiosity shop on the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and took from it yataghans and Turkish weapons. The corpse of a mason, killed by a bullet lay in the Rue de la Perle. And then, on the right bank and the left bank, on the quays, on the boulevards, in the Quartier Latin, and on the Quartier of Halles, panting men, workmen, students, and sectionists, read proclamations, shouted "To arms!" broke the lanterns, unharnessed vehicles, tore up the pavement, broke in the doors of houses, uprooted trees, searched cellars, rolled up barrels, heaped up paving-stones, furniture, and planks, and formed barricades.

Citizens were forced to lend a hand; the rioters went to the wives, compelled them to surrender the sabre and musket of their absent husbands, and then wrote on the door in chalk, *The arms are given up*. Some signed with their own names receipts for musket and sabre and said, *Send for them to-morrow at the Mayoralty*. Isolated sentries and National Guards proceeding to their gathering place were disarmed in the streets. Epaulettes were torn from the officers, and in the Rue du Cimetière St. Nicholas, an officer of the National Guard, pursued by a party armed with sticks and forks, found refuge with great difficulty in a house, where he was compelled to remain till night, and then went away in disguise. In the Quartier St. Jacques the students came out of their lodging-houses in swarms, and went up the Rue Ste. Hyacinthe to the Café du Progrès, or down to the Café des Sept Billiards in the Rue des Mathurins, there the young men stood on benches and distributed arms; and the timber yard in the Rue Transnonain was pillaged to make barricades. Only at one spot did the inhabitants offer resistance, at the corner of the Rue St. Avoye and Simon-le-Franc, where they themselves destroyed the

barricade. Only at one point too did the insurgents give way; they abandoned a barricade begun in the Rue Temple, after firing at a detachment of the National Guard, and fled along the Rue de la Corderie. The detachment picked up on the barricade a red flag, a packet of cartridges, and three hundred pistol bullets; the National Guards tore up the flag, and carried off the strips on the point of their bayonets. All this which we are describing here slowly and successively, was going on simultaneously at all parts of the city, in the midst of a vast tumult, like a number of lightning flashes in a single peal of thunder.

In less than an hour twenty-seven barricades issued from the ground in the simple quarter of the Halles; in the centre was that famous house No. 50, which was the fortress of Jeanne and her hundred-and-six companions, and which, flanked on one side by a barricade at St. Merry, and on the other by a barricade in the Rue Maubuée, commanded the three streets, des Arcis, St. Martin, and Aubry le Boucher, the last of which it faced. This is without counting innumerable barricades in twenty other districts of Paris, as the Marais and the Montagne Ste. Geneviève; one in the Rue Menilmontant, in which a gate could be seen torn off its hinges; and another near the little bridge of the Hotel Dieu, made of an overthrown vehicle. Three hundred yards from the prefecture of police, at the barricade in the Rue des Ménétriers, a well-dressed man distributed money to the artisans; at the barricade in the Rue Grenetat a horseman rode up and handed to the man who seemed to be the chief of the barricade a roll, which looked like money. "Hear," he said, "is something to pay the expenses, —the wine, etc." A light-haired young man, without a cravat, went from one barricade to another, carrying the passwords, and another, with drawn sabre and a blue forage-cap on his head, stationed sentries. In the interior, within the barricades, the wine-shops and cabarets were converted into guard-rooms, and the riot was managed in accordance with the most skilful military tactics. The narrow, uneven winding streets, full of corners and turnings, were admirably selected,—the vicinity of the Halles more especially, a network of streets more tangled than a forest. The society of the Friends of the People had, it was said, taken the direction of the insur-

rection in the St. Avoye district, and a plan of Paris was found on the body of a man killed in the Rue du Ponceau.

What had really assumed the direction of the insurrection was a sort of unknown impetuosity that was in the atmosphere. The insurrection had suddenly built barricades with one hand, and with the other seized nearly all the garrison posts. In less than three hours the insurgents, like a powder-train fire, had seized and occupied on the right bank the Arsenal, the Popincourt arms factory, the Galiote, the Château d'Eau, and all the streets near the Halles; on the left bank the veterans' barracks, Ste. Pelagie, the Place Maubert, the powder manufactory and the Two-mills, and all the barrières. At five in the evening they were masters of the Bastille, the Lingerie, and the Blanc-Man-teaux; while their scouts were close to the Place de Victoires and menaced the bank, the barracks of the Petits-Pères and the post-office. One-third of Paris was in the hands of the revolt. On all points the struggle had begun on a gigantic scale, and the result of the disarmaments, the domiciliary visits, and the attack on the gunsmiths' shops, was that the fight which had begun with stone-throwing was continued with musket-shots.

About six in the evening the Passage du Saumon became the battlefield; the rioters were at one end and the troops at the other, and they fired from one gate to the other. An observer, a dreamer, the author of this book, who had gone to have a near look at the volcano, found himself caught between two fires in the passage, and had nothing to protect him from the bullets but the projecting semi-columns which used to separate the shops; he was nearly half an hour in this delicate condition. In the meanwhile the tattoo was beaten, the National Guards hurriedly dressed and armed themselves, the legions issued from the mayoralty, and the regiments from the barracks. Opposite Anchor Passage a drummer was stabbed; another was attacked in the Rue de Cygne by thirty young men who ripped up his drum and took his sabre, while a third was killed in the Rue Grenier St. Lazare. In the Rue Michel le Comte three officers fell dead one after the other, and several municipal guards, wounded in the Rue des Lombards, recoiled. In front of the Cour Batave, a detachment of National Guards found a red flag, bearing

this inscription "*Republican Revolution, No. 127.*" Was it really a revolution? The insurrection had made of the heart of Paris a sort of inextricable, tortuous, and colossal citadel; there was the nucleus, there the question would be solved; all the rest was merely skirmishing. The proof that all would be decided there lay in the fact that fighting had not yet begun there.

In some regiments the troops were uncertain, which added to the startling obscurity of the crisis; and they remembered the popular ovation which, in July, 1830, greeted the neutrality of the 53d line. Two intrepid men, tried by the great wars, Marshal de Lobau and General Bugeaud, commanded—Bugeaud under Lobau. Enormous patrols, composed of battalions of the line enclosed in entire companies of the National Guard, and preceded by the police commissary in his scarf, went to reconnoitre the insurgent streets. On their side, the insurgents posted vedettes at the corner of the streets, and audaciously sent patrols beyond the barricades. Both sides were observing each other; the government, with an army in its hand, hesitated, night was setting in, and the tocsin of St. Mary was beginning to be heard. Marshal Soult, the minister of war at that day, who had seen Austerlitz, looked at all this with a gloomy air. These old sailors, habituated to correct manœuvres, and having no other resource and guide but tactics, the compass of battles, are completely thrown out when in the presence of that immense foam which is called the public anger. The wind of revolutions is not favorable for sailing. The National Guards of the suburbs ran up hastily and disorderly; a battalion of the 12th Light Infantry came at the double from St. Denis; the 14th line arrived from Courbevoie, the batteries of the military school had taken up position at the Carrousel, and guns were brought in from Vincennes.

At the Tuileries there was not an additional sentry posted, and Louis Philippe was full of serenity.

## CHAPTER CCXVI.

### ORIGINALITY OF PARIS.

DURING the two past years Paris, as we said, had seen more than one insurrection. With the exception of the insurgent districts,

as a rule, nothing is more strangely calm than the physiognomy of Paris during a riot. Paris very soon grows accustomed to every thing—it is only a riot—and Paris has so much to do that it does not put itself out of the way for such a trifle. These colossal cities alone can offer such spectacles. These immense enclosures alone can contain simultaneously civil war and a strange tranquillity. Usually, when the insurrection begins, when the drum, the tattoo, and the assembly are heard, the shopkeeper confines himself to saying,—

“Ah, there seems to be a row in the Rue St. Martin.”

Or,—

“The Faubourg St. Antoine.”

And he often adds negligently,—

“Somewhere over that way.”

At a later date, when the heart-rending and mournful sound of musketry and platoon fire can be distinguished the shopkeeper says,—

“Bless me, it is growing hot.”

A moment later, if the riot approaches and spreads, he precipitately closes his shop and puts on his uniform, that is to say, places his wares in safety, and risks his person. Men shoot themselves on a square, in a passage, or a blind alley; barricades are taken, lost, and retaken, blood flows, the grapeshot pockmark the fronts of the houses, bullets kill people on their beds, and corpses encumber the pavement. A few yards off you hear the click of the billiard-balls in the coffee-houses. The theatres open their doors and play farces; and gossips talk and laugh two yards from these streets full of war. Hackney coaches roll along, and their fares are going to dine out, sometimes in the very district where the fighting is. In 1831 a fusillade was interrupted in order to let a wedding pass. During the insurrection of May 12, 1839, in the Rue St. Martin, a little old infirm man, dragging a hand-truck surmounted by a tricolor rag, and carrying bottles full of some fluid, came and went from the barricade to the troops, and from the troops to the barricade, impartially offering glasses of coco, first to the government and then to anarchy. Nothing can be stranger, and this is the peculiar character of Parisian riots, which is not found in any other capital, as two things are required for it—the grandeur of Paris and its gayety, the

city of Voltaire and of Napoleon. This time, however, in the insurrection of June 5, 1832, the great city felt something which was perhaps stronger than itself, and was frightened. Everywhere, in the most remote and disinterested districts, doors, windows, and shutters were closed in broad daylight. The courageous armed, the cowardly hid themselves, and the careless and busy passengers disappeared. Many streets were as empty as at four in the morning. Alarming details were hawked about, and fatal news spread—that *they* were masters of the bank—that at the cloisters of St. Merry alone, they were six hundred, intrenched with loopholes in a church—that the line was sure—that Armand Carrel had been to see Marshal Clausel, and the latter said to him, *Have a regiment first*—that Lafayette, though ill, had said to them, *I am with you and will follow you wherever there is room for a chair*—that people must be on their guard, for at night burglars would plunder isolated houses in the deserted corners of Paris (in this could be recognized the imagination of the police, that Anne Ratcliffe blended with the government)—that a battery had been established in the Rue Aubry-le-Boucher—that Lobau and Bugeaud were agreed, and that at midnight, or at daybreak at the latest, four columns would march together on the centre of the revolt, the first coming from the Bastille, the second from the Porte St. Martin, the third from the Grève, and the fourth from the Halles—that, perhaps too the troops would evacuate Paris, and retire on the Champ de Mars—that no one knew what would happen, but this time it was certainly very serious. People were alarmed too by the hesitation of Marshal Soult; why did he not attack at once? It is certain that he was greatly absorbed, and the old lion seemed to scent an unknown monster in the darkness.

Night came, and the theatres were not opened, the patrols went their rounds with an air of irritation, passers-by were searched, and suspected persons arrested. At nine o'clock there were more than eight hundred persons taken up, and the Prefecture of Police, the Conciergerie, and la Force were crowded. At the Conciergerie, especially, the long vault called the Rue de Paris, was strewn with trusses of straw, on which lay a pile of prisoners, whom Lagrange, the man of

Lyons, valiantly harangued. All this straw, moved by all these men, produced the sound of a shower. Elsewhere the prisoners slept in the open air on lawns; there was anxiety everywhere, and a certain trembling, not at all usual to Paris. People barricaded themselves in the houses; wives and mothers were alarmed, and nothing else but this was heard, *Oh heavens! he has not come in!* Only the rolling of a few vehicles could be heard in the distance, and people listened in the doorways to the noises, cries, tumults, and dull, indistinct sounds, of which they said, *That is the cavalry, or It is the galloping of tumbrils*; to the bugles, the drums, the firing, and before all to the lamentable tocsin of St. Merry. They waited for the first artillery round, and men rose at the corner of the streets and disappeared, after shouting "Go in." And they hastened to bolt their doors, saying, "How will it all end?" From moment to moment, as the night became darker, Paris seemed to be more lugubriously colored by the formidable flashes of the revolt.

## CHAPTER CCXVII.

### GAVROCHE ON THE MARCH.

At the moment when the insurrection, breaking out through the collision between the people and the troops in front of the arsenal, produced a retrograde movement in the multitude that followed the hearse, and which pressed with the whole length of the boulevards upon the head of the procession, there was a frightful reflux. The ranks were broken, and all ran or escaped, some with the cries of attack, others with the pallor of flight. The great stream which covered the boulevards divided in a second, overflowed on the right and left, and spread in torrents over two hundred streets at once as if a dyke had burst. At this moment a ragged lad who was coming down the Rue Menilmontant, holding in his hand a branch of flowering aburnum which he had picked on the heights of Belleville, noticed in the shop of a seller of curiosities an old holster pistol. He threw his branch in the pavement and cried,—

"Mother What's-your-name, I'll borrow your machine."

And he ran off with the pistol. Two minutes after a crowd of frightened cits flying

through the Rue Basse met the lad, who was brandishing his pistol and singing,—

La nuit on ne voit rien,  
Le jour on voit très bien,  
D'un écrit apocryphe  
Le bourgeois s'ébouriffe  
Pratiquez la vertu,  
Tutu chapeau pointu !

It was little Gavroche going to the wars; on the boulevard he noticed that his pistol had no hammer. Who was the composer of this couplet which served to punctuate his march, and all the other songs which he was fond of singing when he had a chance? who knows? himself, perhaps. Besides, Gavroche was acquainted with all the popular tunes in circulation, and mingled with them his own chirping, and, as a young vagabond, he made a *pot-pourri* of the voices of nature and the voices of Paris. He combined the repertory of the birds with that of the workshops, and he was acquainted with artists' grinders, a tribe contiguous to his own. He had been for three months, it appears, apprenticed to a painter, and had one day delivered a message for M. Baour Lormian, one of the forty; Gavroche was a lettered gamin. Gavroche did not suspect, however, that on that wretched rainy night when he offered the hospitality of his elephant to the two boys he was performing the offices of Providence to his two brothers. His brothers in the evening, his father in the morning,—such had been his night. On leaving the Rue des Ballets at dawn, he hurried back to the elephant, artistically extracted the two boys, shared with them the sort of breakfast which he had invented, and then went away, confiding them to that good mother, the street, who had almost brought himself up. On leaving them he gave them the meeting on the same spot at night, and left them this speech as farewell,—*"I am breaking a cane, alias my name's walker, or, as they say at court, I am going to hook it. My brats, if you do not find papa and mamma, come here again to-night. I will give you your supper and put you to bed."* The two lads, picked up by some policeman and placed at the dépôt, or stolen by some mountebank, or simply lost in that Chinese puzzle, Paris, did not return. The substrata of the existing social world are full of such lost traces. Gavroche had not seen them again, and ten or twelve weeks had elapsed since that night. More than

once he had scratched his head and asked himself, "Where the deuce are my two children?"

He reached the Rue du Pont aux Choux, and noticed that there was only one shop still open in that street, and it was worthy of reflection that it was a confectioner's. It was a providential opportunity to eat one more apple-puff before entering the unknown. Gavroche stopped, felt in his pockets, turned them inside out, found nothing, not even a sou, and began shouting, "Help!" It is hard to go without the last cake, but for all that Gavroche went on his way. Two minutes after he was in the Rue St. Louis, and on crossing the Rue du Parc Royal he felt the necessity of compensating himself for the impossible apple-puff, and gave himself the immense treat of tearing down in open daylight the play-bills. A little further on, seeing a party of stout gentry who appeared to him to be retired from business, he shrugged his shoulders and spat out this mouthful of philosophic bile,—

"How fat annuitants are! they wallow in good dinners. Ask them what they do with their money and they don't know. They eat it, eat their bellyful."

Holding a pistol without a cock in the streets is such a public function, that Gavroche felt his humor increase at every step. He cried between the scraps of the Marsellaise which he sang,—

"All goes well. I suffer considerably in my left paw. I have broken my rheumatism, but I am happy, citizens. The bourgeoisie have only to hold firm, and I am going to sing them some subversive couplets. What are the police? dogs; after all," he added, thinking of the hammer\* missing from his pistol, "we must not treat all dogs disrespectfully. I have just come from the boulevard, my friends, where it is getting warm, and the soup is simmering; it is time to skim the pot. Forward, my men, and let an impure blood inundate the furrows! I give my days for my country. I shall not see my concubine again, it's all over. Well, no matter! long live joy! let us fight, crebleu, for I have had enough of despotism!"

At this moment the horse of a lancer, in the National Guard, who was passing, fell. Gavroche laid his pistol on the pavement,

helped the man up, and then helped to raise the horse, after which he picked up his pistol and went his way again. In the Rue de Thorigny all was peace and silence; and this apathy, peculiar to the Marais, contrasted with the vast surrounding turmoil. Four gossips were conversing on the step of a door; Scotland has trios of witches, but Paris has quartettes of gossips, and the "thou shalt be king" would be as lugubriously cast at Bonaparte at the Bandoyer crossway, as to Macbeth on the Highland heath—it would be much the same croak. The gossips in the Rue Thorigny only trouble themselves about their own affairs; they were three portresses, and a rag-picker with her dorser and her hook. They seemed to be standing all four at the four corners of old age, which are decay, decrepitude, ruin, and sorrow. The rag-picker was humble, for in this open-air world the rag-picker bows, and the portress protects. The things thrown into the street are fat and lean, according to the fancy of the person who makes the pile, and there may be kindness in the broom. This rag-picker was grateful, and she smiled, what a smile! at the three portresses. They were making remarks like the following,—

"So your cat is as ill-tempered as ever?"

"Well, good gracious, you know that cats are naturally the enemy of dogs. It's the dogs that complain."

"And people too."

"And yet cats' fleas do not run after people."

"Dogs are really dangerous. I remember one year when there were so many dogs that they were obliged to put it in the papers. It was at that time when there were large sheep at the Tuileries to drag the little carriage of the king of Rome. Do you remember the king of Rome?"

"I was very fond of the Duc de Bordeaux."

"Well, I know Louis XVII., and like him better."

"How dear meat is, Mame Patagon!"

"Oh, don't talk about it, butcher's meat is a horror, a horrible horror. It is only possible to buy sticking pieces now."

Here the rag-picker interposed,—

"Ladies, trade does not go on well at all, and the rubbish is abominable. People do not throw away any thing now, but eat it all."

\* An untranslatable pun, as the hammer of a pistol is called a dog in France.



"There are poorer folk than you, Vargou-lême."

"Ah, that's true," the rag-picker replied deferentially, "for I have a profession."

There was a pause, and the rag-picker yielding to that need of display which is at the bottom of the human heart, added,—

"When I go home in the morning I empty out my basket and sort the articles; that makes piles in my room. I put the rags in a box, the cabbage stalks in a tub, the pieces of linen in my cupboard, the woollen rags in my chest of drawers, old papers on the corner of the window, things good to eat in my porringer, pieces of glass in the fireplace, old shoes behind the door, and bones under my bed."

Gavroche had stopped and was listening.

"Aged dames," he said, "what right have you to talk politics?"

A broadside composed of quadruple yell, assailed him.

"There's another of the villains."

"What's that he has in his hand?" a pistol?"

"Just think, that rogue of a boy!"

"They are never quiet unless when they are overthrowing the authorities."

Gavroche disdainfully limited his reprisals to lifting the tip of his nose with his thumb, and opening his hand to its full extent. The rag-picker exclaimed,—

"The barefooted scamp!"

The one who answered to the name of Mame Patagon struck her hands together with scandal.

"There are going to be misfortunes, that's safe. The young fellow with the beard round the corner, I used to see him pass every morning with a girl in a pink bonnet on his arm; but this morning I saw him pass, and he was giving his arm to a gun. Mame Bacheux says there was a revolution last week at, at, at, at,—where do the calves come from?—at Pontoise. And then just look at this atrocious young villain's pistol. It seems that the Celestins are full of cannon. What would you have the government do with these vagabonds who can only invent ways to upset the world, after we were beginning to get over all the misfortunes which fell, good gracious! on that poor queen whom I saw pass in a cart! and all this will raise the price of snuff. It is infamous, and I will certainly go and see you guillotined, malefactor."

"You snuffe, my aged friend," said Gavroche, "blow your promontory."

And he passed on. When he was in the Rue Pavée his thoughts reverted to the rag-picker, and he had this soliloquy,—

"You are wrong to insult the revolutionists, Mother Cornerpost. This pistol is on your behalf, and it is for you to have in your baskets more things good to eat."

All at once he heard a noise behind; it was the portress Patagon who had followed him and now shook her fist at him, crying,—

"You are only a bastard."

"At that I scoff with all my heart," said Gavroche.

A little later he passed the Hotel Lamoignon, where he burst into this appeal,—

"Let us haste to the battle."

And he was attacked by a fit of melancholy; he regarded his pistol reproachfully, and said to it,—

"I am going off, but you will not go off."

One dog may distract another; \* a very thin whelp passed, and Gavroche felt pity for it.

"My poor little creature," he said to it, "you must have swallowed a barrel, as you show all the hoops."

Then he proceeded toward the Orme St. Gervais. The worthy barber who had turned out the two children for whom Gavroche had opened the elephant's paternal intestines, was at this moment in his shop, engaged in shaving an old legionary who had served under the empire. The barber had naturally spoken to the veteran about the riot, then about General Lamarque, and from Lamarque they had come to the emperor. Hence arose a conversation between the barber and the soldier which Prudhomme, had he been present, would have enriched with arabesques, and entitled, "A dialogue between a razor and a sabre."

"How did the emperor ride, sir?" the barber asked.

"Badly. He did not know how to fall off, and so he never fell off."

"Had he fine horses? he must have had fine horses."

"On the day when he gave me the cross I noticed his beast. It was a white mare. It had its ears very far apart, a deep saddle, a fine head, marked with a black star, a very long neck, prominent knees, projecting

\* Another allusion to the hammer (chien) of the pistol.

flanks, oblique shoulders, and a strong crupper. It was a little above fifteen hands high."

"A fine horse," said the barber.

"It was his majesty's animal."

The barber felt that after this remark a little silence was befitting; then he went on,—

"The emperor was only wounded once, I believe, sir?"

The old soldier replied, with the calm and sovereign accent of the man who has felt wounds,—

"In the heel, at Ratisbon. I never saw him so well dressed as on that day. He was as clean as a half-penny."

"And you, sir, I suppose, have received sword-wounds?"

"I," said the soldier, "oh, a mere flea-bite. I received two sabre-cuts on my neck at Marengo, I got a bullet in my right arm at Jena, another in the left hip at Jena; at Friedland a bayonet-thrust—there; at the Muskowa seven or eight lance prods, never mind where; at Lützen, a piece of shell carried off a finger, and—oh, yes! at Waterloo a bullet from a case-shot in my thigh. That's all."

"How glorious it is," the barber exclaimed, with a Pindaric accent, "to die on the battle-field! on my word of honor, sooner than die on a bed of disease, slowly, a bit every day, with drugs, cataplasms, clysters, and medicine, I would sooner have a cannon-ball in my stomach!"

"And you're right," said the soldier. He had scarce ended ere a frightful noise shook the shop; a great pane of glass was suddenly smashed, and the barber turned livid.

"Good Lord!" he cried, "it is one!"

"What?"

"A cannon-ball."

"Here it is."

And he picked up something which was rolling on the ground—it was a pebble. The barber ran to his broken pane, and saw Gavroche flying at full speed towards the Marché St. Jean. On passing the barber's shop Gavroche, who had the two lads at his heart, could not resist the desire of wishing him good evening, and threw a stone through his window.

"Just look," the barber yelled, who had become blue instead of livid, "he does harm for harm's sake. What had I done to that villain?"

## CHAPTER CCXVIII.

### THE OLD MAN.

ON reaching the market, the post at which had been disarmed already, Gavroche effected his junction with a band led by Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Feuilly. They were all more or less armed, and Bahorel and Prouvaire had joined them and swelled the group. Enjolras had a double-barrelled fowling-piece, Combeferre a National Guard's musket bearing the number of a legion, and in his waist-belt two pistols, which his unbuttoned coat allowed to be seen; Jean Prouvaire an old cavalry musketoon, and Bahorel a carbine; Courfeyrac brandished a sword drawn from a cane, while Feuilly with a naked sabre in his hand walked along shouting, "Long live Poland!" They reached the Quai Morland without neckcloths or hats, panting for breath, drenched with rain, but with lightning in their eyes. Gavroche calmly approached them,—

"Where are we going?"

"Come," said Courfeyrac.

Behind Feuilly marched or rather bounded Bahorel, a fish in the water of revolt. He had a crimson waistcoat, and uttered words which smash every thing. His waistcoat upset a passer-by, who cried wildly, "Here are the reds!"

"The reds, the reds," Bahorel answered, "that's a funny fear, citizen. For my part, I do not tremble at a poppy, and the little red cap does not inspire me with any terror. Citizen, believe me, let us leave a fear of the red to horned cattle."

He noticed a corner wall, on which was placarded the most peaceful piece of paper in the world, a permission to eat eggs, a Lent mandamus addressed by the archbishop of Paris to his "flock." Bahorel exclaimed,—

"A flock! a polite way of saying geese." And he tore the paper down. This conquered Gavroche, and from this moment he began studying Bahorel.

"Bahorel," Enjolras observed, "you are wrong, you should have left that order alone, for we have nothing to do with it, and you needlessly exposed your passion. Keep your stock by you; a man does not fire out of the ranks any more with his mind than with his gun."

"Every man has his own way, Enjolras," Bahorel replied; "the bishop's prose offends

me, and I insist on eating eggs without receiving permission to do so. Yours is the cold burning style, while I amuse myself; moreover, I am not expending myself, but getting the steam up, and if I tore that order down, Herclé! it is to give me an appetite."

This word *herclé* struck Gavroche, for he sought every opportunity of instructing himself, and this tearing down of posters possessed his esteem. Hence he asked,—

"What's the meaning of *herclé*?"

Bahorel answered,—

"It means cursed name of a dog in Latin."

Here Bahorel noticed at a window a young pale man, with a black beard, who was watching them pass, probably a friend of the A. B. C. He shouted to him,—

"Quick with the cartridges, *para bellum*."

"A handsome man (*bel homme*), that's true," said Gavroche, who now comprehended Latin.

A tumultuous crowd accompanied them—students, artists, young men affiliated to the *Cougourde* of Aix, artisans, and lightermen, armed with sticks and bayonets, and some, like *Combeferre*, with pistols passed through their trouser-belts. An old man, who appeared very aged, marched in this band; he had no weapon, and hurried on, that he might not be left behind, though he looked thoughtful. It was M. Mabœuf. We will tell what had occurred. Enjolras and his friends were on the *Bourdon Boulevard* near the granaries, at the moment when the dragons charged, and Enjolras, *Courfeyrac*, and *Combeferre* were among those who turned into the *Rue Bassompierre* shouting "To the barricades!" In the *Rue Lesdiguières* they met an old man walking along, and what attracted their attention was that he was moving very irregularly, as if intoxicated. Moreover, he had his hat in his hand, although it had rained the whole morning, and was raining rather hard at that very moment. *Courfeyrac* recognized Father Mabœuf, whom he knew through having accompanied Marius sometimes as far as his door. Knowing the peaceful and more than timid habits of the churchwarden and bibliomaniac, and stupefied at seeing him in the midst of the tumult, within two yards of cavalry charges, almost in the midst of the musketry fire, bareheaded in the rain, and walking about among bullets, he accosted him, and the rebel of five-and-

twenty and the octogenarian exchanged this dialogue:

"Monsieur Mabœuf, you had better go home."

"Why so?"

"There is going to be a row."

"Very good."

"Sabre-cuts and shots, M. Mabœuf."

"Very good."

"Cannon-shots."

"Very good. Where are you gentlemen going?"

"To upset the government."

"Very good."

And he began following them, but since that moment had not said a word. His step had become suddenly firm, and when workmen offered him an arm, he declined it with a shake of the head. He walked almost at the head of the column, having at once the command of a man who is marching and the face of a man who is asleep.

"What a determined old fellow!" the students muttered, and the rumor ran along the party that he was an ex-conventionalist, an old regicide. The band turned into the *Rue de la Verrerie*, and little Gavroche marched at the head, singing at the top of his voice, which made him resemble a bugler. He sang:

"Voici la lune qui paraît,

Quand irons nous dans la forêt?

Demandait Charlot à Charlotte.

Tou tou tou

Pour Chatou,

Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

"Pour avoir bu de grand matin

La rosée à même le thym,

Deux moineaux étaient en ribotte.

Zi zi zi

Pour Passy.

Je na'i qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

"Et ces deux pauvres petits loups

Comme deux grives étaient soûls;

Un tigre en riait dans sa grotte.

Don don don

Pour Meudon.

Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

"L'un jurait et l'autre sacrait,

Quand irons nous dans la forêt?

Demandait Charlot à Charlotte.

Tin tin tin

Pour Pantin.

Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte."

They were going to St. Merry. The band swelled every moment, and near the *Rue des*

Billetes, a tall, grayish-haired man, whose rough bold face Courfeyrac, Enjolras and Combeferre noticed, though not one of them knew him, joined them. Gavroche, busy singing, whistling, and shouting, and rapping the window shutters with his pistol-butt, paid no attention to this man. As they went through the Rue de la Verrerie they happened to pass Courfeyrac's door.

"That's lucky," said Courfeyrac, "for I have forgotten my purse and lost my hat."

He left the band and bounded up stairs, where he put on an old hat, and put his purse in his pocket. He also took up a large square box of the size of a portmanteau, which was concealed among his dirty linen. As he was running down stairs again, his portress hailed him.

"Monsieur de Courfeyrac!"

"Portress, what is your name?" Courfeyrac retorted.

She stood in stupefaction.

"Why, you know very well, sir, that my name is Mother Veuvain."

"Well then, if ever you call me M. de Courfeyrac again, I shall call you Mother de Veuvain; now speak, what is it?"

"Some one wishes to speak to you."

"Who is it?"

"I don't know."

"Where is he?"

"In my lodge."

"Oh, the devil!" said Courfeyrac.

"Why! he has been waiting for more than an hour for you to come in."

At the same time, a species of young workman, thin, livid, small, marked with freckles, dressed in an old blouse and a pair of patched cotton velvet trousers, who looked more like a girl attired as a boy, than a man, stepped out of the lodge, and said to Courfeyrac, in a voice which was not the least in the world a feminine voice,—

"Monsieur Marius, if you please?"

"He is not here."

"Will he come in to-night?"

"I do not know."

And Courfeyrac added, "I shall not be in to night."

The young man looked at him intently and asked,—

"Why not?"

"Because I shall not."

"Where are you going?"

"How does that concern you?"

"Shall I carry your chest for you?"

"I am going to the barricades."

"May I go with you?"

"If you like," Courfeyrac replied: "the street is free, and the pavement belongs to everybody."

And he ran off to join his friends again; when he had done so he gave one of them the box to carry, and it was not till a quarter of an hour after that he noticed that the young man was really following them. A band does not go exactly where it wishes, and we have explained that a puff of wind directs it. They passed St. Merry, and found themselves, without knowing exactly why, in the Rue St. Denis.

## CHAPTER CCXIX.

### HISTORY OF CORINTH FROM ITS FOUNDATION.

THE Parisians, who at the present day on entering the Rue Rambuteau from the side of the Halles notice on their right, opposite the Rue Mondétour, a basket-maker's shop having for a sign a basket in the shape of Napoleon the Great, with this inscription,—

NAPOLEON EST FAIT  
TOUT EN OSIER,—

do not suspect the terrible scenes which this very site saw hardly thirty years ago. Here were the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which old title-deeds write Chanverrerie, and the celebrated wine-shop called Corinth. Our readers well remember all that has been said about the barricade erected at this spot, and eclipsed, by the way, by the St. Merry barricade. It is on this famous barricade of the de la Chanvrerie, which has now fallen into deep night, that we are going to throw a little light.

For the clearness of our narrative, we may be permitted to have recourse to the simple mode which we employed for Waterloo. Those persons who wish to represent to themselves in a tolerably exact manner the mass of houses which at that day stood at the north-east corner of the Halles, at the spot where the opening of the Rue Rambuteau now is, need only imagine an N whose two vertical strokes are the Rue de la Grande Truanderie, and the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and of which the Rue de la Petite Truanderie would be the cross-stroke. The old Rue Mondétour intersected the three strokes

with the most tortuous angles, so that the Dædalian entanglement of these four streets was sufficient to make, upon a space of one hundred square yards, between the Halles and the Rue St. Denis on one side, between the Rue du Cygne and the Rue des Precheurs, on the other side, seven islets of houses, strangely cut, of different heights, standing side-ways, and as if accidentally, and scarce separated by narrow cracks, like the blocks of stone in a dock. We say narrow cracks and cannot give a fairer idea of these obscure, narrow, angular lanes, bordered by tenements eight stories in height. These houses were so decrepit that in the Rues de la Chanvrerie and La Petite Truanderie, the frontages were supported by beams running across from one house to the other. The street was narrow and the gutter wide; the passer-by walked on a constantly damp pavement, passing shops like cellars, heavy posts shod with iron, enormous piles of filth, and gates armed with extraordinarily old palings. The Rue Rambuteau has devastated all this. The name of Mondétour exactly describes the windings of all this lay-stall. A little further on it was found even better expressed by the Rue Pirouette, which threw itself into the Rue Mondétour. The wayfarer who turned out of the Rue St. Denis into the Rue de la Chanvrerie saw it gradually contract before him, as if he had entered an elongated tunnel. At the end of the street, which was very short, he found the passage barred on the side of the Halles by a tall row of houses, and he might have fancied himself in a blind alley had he not perceived on his right and left two black cuts through which he could escape. It was the Rue Mondétour, which joined on one side the Rue des Precheurs, on the other the Rue du Cygne. At the end of this sort of blind alley, at the corner of the right-hand cutting, a house lower than the rest, forming a species of cape in the street, might be noticed. It is in this house, only two stories high, that an illustrious cabaret had been installed for more than three hundred years. This inn produced a joyous noise at the very spot which old Theophile indicated in the two lines,—

Là branle le squelette horrible  
D'un pauvre amant qui se pendit.

The spot was good, and the landlords succeeded each other from father to son. In

the time of Mathurin Régnier this inn was called the "Rose-pot," and as rebuses were fashionable, it had as sign a post painted pink, which represented a "Poteau rose," hence the pot-aux-roses. In the last century worthy Natoire, one of the fantastic masters disdained at the present day by the stiff school, having got tipsy several times in this inn at the same table where Régnier had got drunk, painted out of gratitude a bunch of currants on the pink post. The landlord, in his delight, changed his sign, and had the words gilt under the bunch, *au raisin de Corinthe*, hence the name of Corinthe. Nothing is more natural to drunkards than ellipses, for they are the zig-zags of language. Corinth had gradually dethroned the rose-pot, and the last landlord of the dynasty, Father Hucheloup, being not acquainted with the tradition, had the post painted blue.

A ground-floor room in which was the bar, a first-floor room in which was a billiard-table, a spiral wooden staircase piercing the ceiling, wine on the tables, smoke on the walls, and candles by daylight—such was the inn. A staircase with a trap in the ground-floor room led to the cellar, and the apartments of the Hucheloups were on the second floor, reached by a staircase more like a ladder, and through a door hidden in the wall of the first-floor room. Under the roof were two garrets, the nests of the maid-servants, and the kitchen shared the ground floor with the bar. Father Hucheloup might have been born a chemist, but was really a cook, and customers not only drank but ate in his wine-shop. Hucheloup had invented an excellent dish, which could only be eaten in his establishment; it was stuffed carp, which he called *carpes au gras*. This was eaten by the light of a tallow-candle, or a lamp of the Louis XVI. style on tables on which oil-cloth was nailed in lieu of a table-cloth. People came from a long distance, and Hucheloup one fine morning had thought it advisable to inform passers-by of his "specialty;" he dipped a brush in a pot of blacking, and as he had an orthography of his own, he improvised on his wall the following remarkable inscription,

CARPES HO GRAS.

One winter the showers and the hail amused themselves with effacing the s which termi-

nated the first word, and the *G* which began the last, and the following was left,

## CARPE HO RAS.

By the aid of time and rain a humble gastronomic notice had become a profound counsel. In this way it happened that Hucheloup, not knowing French, had known Latin, had brought philosophy out of the kitchen, and while simply wishing to shut up Carême, equalled Horace. And the striking thing was that this also meant "enter my inn." Nothing of all this exists at the present day; the Mondétour labyrinth was gutted and widened in 1847, and probably is no longer to be found at the present day. The Rue de la Chanvrière and Corinth have disappeared under the pavement of the Rue Rambuteau. As we have said, Corinth was a meeting-place, if not a gathering-place, of Courfeyrac and his friends, and it was Grantaire who discovered it. He went in for the sake of the *carpe ho ras* and returned for the sake of the carp *au gras*. People drank there, ate there, and made a row there: they paid little, paid badly, or paid not at all, but were always welcome. Father Hucheloup was a worthy fellow. Hucheloup, whom we have just called a worthy fellow, was an eating-house keeper with a mustache, an amusing variety. He always looked ill-tempered, appeared wishful to intimidate his customers, growled at persons who came in, and seemed more disposed to quarrel with them than serve them. And yet we maintain people were always welcome. This peculiarity filled his bar, and brought to him young men who said, "Let us go and have a look at Father Hucheloup." He had been a fencing-master, and would suddenly break out into a laugh; he had a rough voice, but was a merry fellow. His was a comical foundation with a tragical look; and he asked for nothing better than to frighten you, something like the snuff-boxes which have the shape of a pistol—the detonation produces a sneeze. He had for wife a Mother Hucheloup, a bearded and very ugly being. About 1830 Father Hucheloup died, and with him disappeared the secret of the carp *au gras*. His widow, who was almost inconsolable, carried on the business, but the cooking degenerated, and became execrable, and the wine, which had always been bad, was frightful. Courfeyrac and his friends, however, contin-

ued to go to Corinth—through pity, said Bossuet.

Widow Hucheloup was short of breath and shapeless, and had rustic recollections, which she deprived of their insipidity by her pronunciation. She had a way of her own of saying things which seasoned her reminiscences of her village and the spring: it had formerly been her delight, she declared, to hear "the red-beasts singing in the awethorns."\* The first-floor room, where the restaurant was, was a large, long apartment, crowded with stools, chairs, benches, and tables, and an old rickety billiard-table. It was reached by the spiral staircase which led to a square hole in the corner of the room, like a ship's hatchway. This apartment, lighted by only one narrow window and a constantly-burning lamp, had a garret-look about it, and all the four-legged articles of furniture behaved as if they had only three. The white-washed wall had for sole ornament the following quatrain in honor of Mame Hucheloup:

Elle étonne à dix pas, elle épouvante à deux  
Une verrue habite en son nez hasardeux;  
On tremble à chaque instant qu'elle ne vous la  
    mouche,  
Et qu'un beau jour son nez ne tombe dans sa bouche.

This was written in charcoal on the wall. Mame Hucheloup, very like her description, walked past this quatrain from morning till night, with the most perfect tranquillity. Two servant girls, called Matelotte and Gibelotte, and who were never known by other names, helped Mame Hucheloup in placing on the tables bottles of blue wine, and the various messes served to the hungry guests in earthenware bowls. Matelotte, stout, round, red-haired, and noisy, an ex-favorite sultana of the the defunct Hucheloup, was uglier than the ugliest mythological monster; and yet, as it is always proper that the servants should be a little behind the mistress, she was not so ugly as Mame Hucheloup. Gibelotte, tall, delicate, white with a lymphatic whiteness, with blue circles round her eyes, and drooping lids, ever exhausted and oppressed, and suffering from what may be called chronic lassitude, the first to rise, the last to go to bed, waited on everybody,

\* The original malapropism, "les loups-de-gorge chanter dans les orgépines," is utterly untranslatable. The above is only an attempt to convey some approximative idea.—L. W.

even the other servant, silently and gently, and smiling a sort of vague, sleepy smile through her weariness. Before entering the restaurant the following line written by Courfeyrac in chalk was legible,—

“Régale si tu peux et mange si tu l’oses.”

## CHAPTER CCXX.

### PRELIMINARY GAYETIES.

LAIGLE of Meaux, as we know, liked better to live with Joly than any one else, and he had a lodging much as the bird has a branch. The two friends lived together, ate together, slept together, and had everything in common, Musichetta perhaps included. They were, to use the expression of the schools, *bini*, or twins. On the morning of June 5 they went to breakfast at Corinth. Joly had a cold in his head, and Laigle’s coat was threadbare, while Joly was well dressed. It was about nine in the morning when they pushed open the door of Corinth, and went up to the first-floor room, where they were received by Matelotte and Gibelotte.

“Oysters, cheese, and ham,” said Laigle.

They sat down at a table, the room was empty, there was no one in it but themselves. Gibelotte, recognizing Joly and Laigle, placed a bottle of wine on the table, and they attacked the first dozen of oysters. A head appeared in the hatchway and a voice said,—

“As I was passing I smelt a delicious perfume of Brie cheese, so I stepped in.”

It was Grantaire; he took a stool and sat down at the table. Gibelotte, on seeing Grantaire, placed two bottles of wine on the table, which made three.

“Are you going to drink these two bottles?” Laigle asked Grantaire; who replied,—

“All men are ingenious, but you alone are ingenious. Two bottles never yet astonished a man.”

The others began with eating, but Grantaire began with drinking; a pint was soon swallowed.

“Why, you must have a hole in your stomach,” said Laigle.

“Well, you have one in your elbow,” Grantaire retorted, and after emptying his glass, he added,—

“Oh yes, Laigle of the funereal orations, your coat is old.”

“I should hope so,” Laigle replied, “for

my coat and I live comfortably together. It has assumed all my wrinkles, does not hurt me anywhere, has moulded itself on my deformities, and is complacent to all my movements, and I only feel its presence because it keeps me warm.”

“Grantaire,” Joly asked, have you come from the Boulevard?”

“No.”

“Laigle and I have just seen the head of the procession pass. It is a marvellous sight.”

“How quiet this street is,” Laigle exclaimed. “Who could suspect that Paris is turned topsy-turvy? How easy it is to see that formerly there were monasteries all round here! Du Breuil and Sauval give a list of them, and so does the Abbé Lebœuf. There was all around where we are now sitting a busy swarm of monks, shod and barefooted, tonsured and bearded, gray, black, white, Franciscans, Minims, Capuchins, Carmelites, little Augustines, great Augustines, old Augustines—”

“Don’t talk about monks,” Grantaire interrupted, “for it makes me feel to want to scratch myself.” Then he exclaimed,—

“Bouh! I have just swallowed a bad oyster, and that has brought back my hypochondria. Oysters are spoiled, servant girls are ugly, and I hate the human race. I passed just now before the great public library in the Rue Richelieu, and that pile of oyster-shells, which is called a library, disgusts me with thinking. What paper! what ink! what pothooks and hangers! all that has been written! what ass was that said man was a featherless biped? And then, too, I met a pretty girl I know, lovely as spring, and worthy to be called Floreal, who was ravished, transported, happy in Paradise, the wretch, because yesterday a hideous banker spotted with small-pox deigned to throw his handkerchief to her! Alas! woman looks out for a keeper quite as much as a lover; cats catch mice as well as birds. This girl not two months ago was living respectably in a garret, and fitted little copper circles into the eyelet-holes of stays, what do you call it? She sewed, she had a flock bed, she lived by the side of a pot of flowers, and was happy. Now she is a bankeress, and the transformation took place last night. I met the victim this morning perfectly happy, and the hideous thing was that the wretched creature was



quite as pretty this morning as she was yesterday, and there was no sign of the financier on her face. Roses have this more or less than women, that the traces which the caterpillars leave on them are visible. Ah! there is no morality left in the world, and I call as witnesses the myrtle, symbol of love, the laurel, symbol of war, the olive, that absurd symbol of peace, the apple-tree which nearly choked Adam with its pips, and the fig-tree, the grandfather of petticoats. As for justice, do you know what justice is? The Gauls covet Clusium, Rome protects Clusium, and asks what wrong Clusium has done them. Brennus answers, "The wrong which Alba did to you, the wrong that Fidène did to you, the wrong that the Equi, Volscians, and Sabines did to you. They were your neighbors, and the Clusians are ours. We understand neighborhood in the same way as you do. You stole Alba, and we take Clusium." Rome says, "You shall not take Clusium," and Brennus took Rome, and then cried, *Væ victis!* That is what justice is! Oh, what birds of prey there are in the world! What eagles, what eagles! the thought makes my flesh creep."

He held out his glass to Joly, who filled it, then drank, and continued almost uninterrupted by the glass of wine, which no one noticed, not even himself:—

"Brennus who takes Rome is an eagle; the banker who takes the grisette is an eagle; and there is no more shame in one than the other. So let us believe nothing; there is only one reality, drinking. Of whatever opinion you may be, whether you back the lean cock, like the canton of Uri, or the fat cock, like the canton of Glarus, it is of no consequence, drink. You talk to me about the boulevard, the procession, etc.; what, are we going to have another revolution? this poverty of resources astonishes me on the part of le bon Dieu; and He must at every moment set to work greasing the groove of events. Things stick and won't move,—look sharp then with a revolution; le bon Dieu has always got his hands black with that filthy cart-wheel grease. In his place, I should act more simply, I should not wind up my machinery at every moment, but lead the human race evenly; I should knit facts mesh by mesh without breaking the thread; I should have no temporary substitutes, and no extraordinary repertory. What you fellows

call progress has two motive powers, men and events, but it is a sad thing that something exceptional is required every now and then. For events as for men the ordinary stock company is not sufficient; among men there must be geniuses, and among events revolutions. Great accidents are the law, and the order of things cannot do without them; and, judging from the apparition of comets, we might be tempted to believe that heaven itself feels a want of leading actors. At the moment when it is least expected, God bills the wall of the firmament with a meteor, and some strange star follows, underlined by an enormous tail. And that causes the death of Cæsar; Brutus gives him a dagger-thrust, and God deals him a blow with a comet. Crac! here is an aurora borealis, here is a revolution, here is a great man: '93 in big letters, Napoleon in a catch-line, and the comet of 1811 at the head of the bill. Ah! what a fine blue poster, spangled all over with unexpected flashes! Boum! boum! an extraordinary sight. Raise your eyes, idlers. Everything is dishevelled, the star as well as the drama. Oh Lord! it is too much and not enough, and these resources, drawn from exceptional circumstances, seem magnificence and are only poverty. My friends, Providence has fallen into the stage of expedients. What does a revolution prove? that God is running short: He produces a *coup d'état*, because there is a solution of continuity between the present and the future, and He is unable to join the ends. In fact, this confirms me in my conjectures as to the state of Jehovah's fortune; and on seeing so much discomfort above and below, so much paltriness and pinching and saving and distress both in heaven and on earth, from the bird which has not a seed of grain, to myself who have not one hundred thousand francs a year,—on seeing human destiny which is very much worn, and even royal destiny which is threadbare, as witness the Prince de Condé hung,—on seeing winter, which is only a rent in the zenith, through which the wind blows,—on seeing so many rags, even in the brand-new morning purple on the tops of the hills,—on seeing drops of dew, those false pearls, and hoar-frost, that *strass*—on seeing humanity unripped and events patched, and so many spots on the sun, so many holes in the moon, and so much wretchedness everywhere—I suspect that God is not rich. There is an

appearance, it is true, but I see the pressure, and He gives a revolution just as a merchant whose cash-box is empty gives a ball. We must not judge the gods by appearances, and under the gilding of heaven I catch a glimpse of a poor universe. There is a bankruptcy in creation, and that is why I am dissatisfied. Just see, this is June 5, and it is almost night; I have been waiting since morning for day to come, and it has not come, and I will wager that it does not come at all. It is the irregularity of a badly-paid clerk. Yes, everything is badly arranged, nothing fits into any thing, this old world is thrown out of gear, and I place myself in the ranks of the opposition. Every thing goes crooked, and the Universe is close-fisted; it is like the children—those who ask get nothing, and those who don't ask get something. And then, again, it afflicts me to look at that bald-headed Laigle of Meaux, and I am humiliated by the thought that I am of the same age as that knee. However, I criticize but do not insult; the universe is what it is, and I speak without any evil meaning, and solely to do my duty by my conscience. Ah! by all the saints of Olympus, and by all the gods of Paradise, I was not made to be a Parisian, that is to say, to be constantly thrown like a shuttle-cock between two battledores, from a group of idlers to a group of noisy fellows. No! I was meant to be a Turk, looking all day at Egyptian damsels performing those exquisite dances, which are as lubricous as the dreams of a chaste man, or a Beauceron peasant, or a Venetian gentleman surrounded by gentildonnes, or a small German prince, supplying half a soldier to the Confederation, and employing his leisure hours in drying his stockings on his hedge, that is to say, his frontier! Such were the destinies for which I was born. Yes, I said Turk, and I will not recall it. I do not understand why the Turks are usually looked upon askance, for Mahom has some good points; let us respect the inventor of harems, of houris, and Paradises of Odaïskues, and we ought not to insult Mahometism, the only religion adorned with a hen-coop! After this, I insist on drinking, for the earth is a great piece of stupidity. And it appears that all those asses are going to fight, to break each other's heads and massacre one another in the heart of summer, in the month of June, when they might go off

with a creature on their arm to inhale in the fields the perfume of that immense cup of tea of cut hay. Really, too many follies are committed. An old broken lantern, which I saw just now at a broker's, suggests a reflection to me, 'it is high time to enlighten the human race.' Yes, I am sad again, and it has come from an oyster and a revolution sticking in my throat. I am growing lugubrious again. Oh, frightful old world! on your surface people strive, are destitute, prostitute themselves, kill themselves, and grow accustomed to it!"

And after this burst of eloquence Grantaire had a burst of coughing, which was well deserved.

"Talking of revolution," said Joly, "it seems that Barius is decidedly in love."

"Do you know who with?" Laigle asked.

"Do."

"No?"

"Do, I tell you."

"The loves of Marius!" Grantaire exclaimed, "I can see them from here. Marius is a fog and will have found a vapor. Marius belongs to the poetic race, and poet and madman are convertible terms. *Thymbræus Apollo*. Marius and his Marie, or his Maria, or his Marriette, or his Marion, must be a funny brace of lovers. I can fancy what it is; ecstasies in which kissing is forgotten. Chaste on earth, but connected in the infinitude. They are souls that have feelings, and they sleep together in the stars."

Grantaire was attacking his second bottle, and perhaps his second harangue, when a new head emerged from the staircase hatchway. It was a boy under ten years of age, ragged, very short and yellow, with a bulldog face, a quick eye, and an enormous head of hair; he was dripping with wet, but seemed happy. The lad, choosing without hesitation among the three, though he knew none of them, addressed Laigle of Meaux.

"Are you M. Bossuet?" he asked.

"I am called so," Laigle replied, "what do you want?"

"A tall, light-haired gent said to me on the boulevard, 'Do you know Mother Hucheloup's?' I said, 'Yes, in the Rue Chanvrière, the old one's widow.' Says he to me, 'Go there, you will find Monsieur Bossuet there, and say to him from me, A—B—C.' I suppose it's a trick played on you, eh? he gave me ten sous."

"Joly, lend me ten sous," said Laigle; and turning to Grantaire, "Grantaire, lend me ten sous."

This made twenty sous, which Laigle gave the lad. "Thank you, sir," he said.

"What is your name?" Laigle asked.

"Navet, Gavroche's friend."

"Stay with us," Laigle said.

"Breakfast with us," Grantaire added.

The lad replied, "I can't, for I belong to the procession, and have to cry, 'Down with Polignac.'"

And, drawing his foot slowly after him, which is the most respectful of bows possible, he went away. When he was gone, Grantaire remarked,—

"That is pure gamin, and there are many varieties in the gamin genus. The notary-gamin is called 'leap-the-gutter'; the cook-gamin is called 'scullion'; the baker-gamin is called 'doughy'; the footman-gamin is called 'tiger'; the sailor-gamin is called 'powder-monkey'; the soldier-gamin is called 'a child of the regiment'; the tradesman-gamin is called 'errand-boy'; the courtier-gamin is called 'page'; the royal-gamin is called 'dauphin'; and the divine-gamin is called 'St. Bambino.'"

In the meanwhile Laigle meditated, and said in a low voice,—

"A—B—C, that is to say, funeral of General Lamarque."

"The tall, fair man," Grantaire observed, "is Enjolras, who has sent to warn you."

"Shall we go?" asked Bossuet.

"It's raiding," said Joly; "I have sworn to go through fire, but not through water, and I do not wish to bake by cold worse."

"I shall stay here," Grantaire remarked; "I prefer breakfast to a hearse."

"Conclusion, we remain," Laigle continued; "In that case let us drink. Besides, we may miss the funeral without missing the row."

"Ah, the row!" cried Joly, "I'd id that."

Laigle rubbed his hands.

"So the revolution of 1830 is going to begin over again."

"I do not care a rap for your revolution," Grantaire remarked, "and I do not execrate the present government, for it is the crown tempered by the cotton night-cap, a sceptre terminating in an umbrella. In such

weather as this Louis Philippe might use his royalty for two objects, stretch out the sceptre-end against the people, and open the umbrella-end against the sky."

The room was dark and heavy clouds completely veiled the day-light. There was no one in the wine-shop or in the streets, for everybody had gone "to see the events."

"Is it midday or midnight?" Bossuet asked; "I can see nothing; bring a candle, Gibelotte."

Grantaire was drinking sorrowfully.

"Enjolras disdains me," he muttered. "Enjolras said to himself, 'Joly is ill and Grantaire is drunk,' and so he sent Navet to Bossuet. And yet, if he had fetched me, I would have followed him. All the worse for Enjolras! I will not go to his funeral."

This resolution formed, Bossuet, Grantaire and Joly did not stir from the wine-shop, and at about 2 P. M. the table at which they sat was covered with empty bottles. Two candles burnt on it, one in a perfectly green copper candlestick, the other in the neck of a cracked water bottle. Grantaire had led Joly and Bossuet to wine, and Bossuet and Joly had brought Grantaire back to joy. As for Grantaire, he gave up wine at midday, as a poor inspirer of dreams. Wine is not particularly valued by serious sots, for inebriety there is black magic and white magic, and wine is only the white magic. Grantaire was attracted rather than arrested by the blackness of a formidable intoxication yawning before him, and he had given up bottles and taken to the dram glass, which is an abyss. Not having at hand either opium or hasheesh, and willing to fill his brain with darkness, he turned to that frightful mixture of brandy, stout and absinthe, which produces such terrible lethargies. Of these three vapors, beer, brandy and absinthe, the lead of the soul is made; they are three darknesses in which the celestial butterfly is drowned; and three dumb furies, nightmare, night and death, which hover over the sleeping Psyche, are produced in a membranous smoke vaguely condensed into a bat's wing. Grantaire had not yet reached that phase, far from it: he was prodigiously gay, and Bossuet and Joly kept even with him. Grantaire added to the eccentric accentuation of words and ideas the devagation of gestures: he laid his left hand on his knee with a dignified air, and with his neckcloth unloosened, straddling his

stool, and with his full glass in his right hand, he threw these solemn words at the stout servant girl, Matelotte.

"Open the gates of the palace ! Let every man belong to the French Academy, and have the right of embracing Madame Hucheloupe ! Let us drink."

And turning to the landlady, he added,—

"Antique female, consecrated by custom, approach, that I may contemplate thee."

And Joly exclaimed,—

"Batelotte and Gibelotte, don't give Grantaire any more drink. He is spending a frightful sum, and only since this morning has devoured in shabeful prodigality two francs, twenty-five centimes."

And Grantaire went on,—

"Who has unhooked the stars without any leave, in order to place them on the table in lieu of candles ?"

Bossuet, who was very drunk retained his calmness, and was sitting on the sill of the open window, letting the rain drench his back while he gazed at his two friends. All at once he heard behind him a tumult, hurried footsteps and shouts of *To arms!* He turned, and noticed in the Rue St. Denis at the end of the Rue Chanvrière, Enjolras passing, carbine in hand, Gavroche with his pistol, Feuilly with his sabre, Courfeyrac with his sword, Jean Prouvaire with his musketoon, Combeferre with his fowling-piece, Bahorel with his carbine, and the whole armed and stormy band that followed them. The Rue de la Chanvrière was not a pistol-shot in length, so Bossuet improvised a speaking-trumpet with his two hands round his mouth, and shouted,—

"Courfeyrac ! Courfeyrac ! hilloh !"

Courfeyrac heard the summons, perceived Bossuet, and walked a few steps down the Rue de la Chanvrière, exclaiming, "What do you want !" which was crossed by a "Where are you going !"

"To make a barricade," Courfeyrac answered.

"Well, why not make it here ? the spot is good."

"That is true, Eagle," Courfeyrac remarked.

And at a sign from Courfeyrac the band rushed into the Rue de la Chanvrière.

The ground was, in fact, admirably suited ; the entrance of the street was wide, the end narrowed, and like a blind alley, Corinth

formed a contraction in it, the Rue de Mondétour could be easily barred right and left, and no attack was possible save by the Rue St. Denis, that is to say, from the front and in the open. Bossuet drunk had had the inspiration of Hannibal sober. At the sound of the band rushing on, terror seized on the whole street, and not a passer-by but disappeared. More quickly than a flash of lightning, shops, stalls, gates, doors, Venetian blinds and shutters of every size, were shut from the ground floor to the roofs, at the end, on the right and on the left. An old terrified woman fixed up a mattress before her window with clothes props, in order to deaden the musketry, and the public house alone remained open—and for an excellent reason because the insurgents had rushed into it.

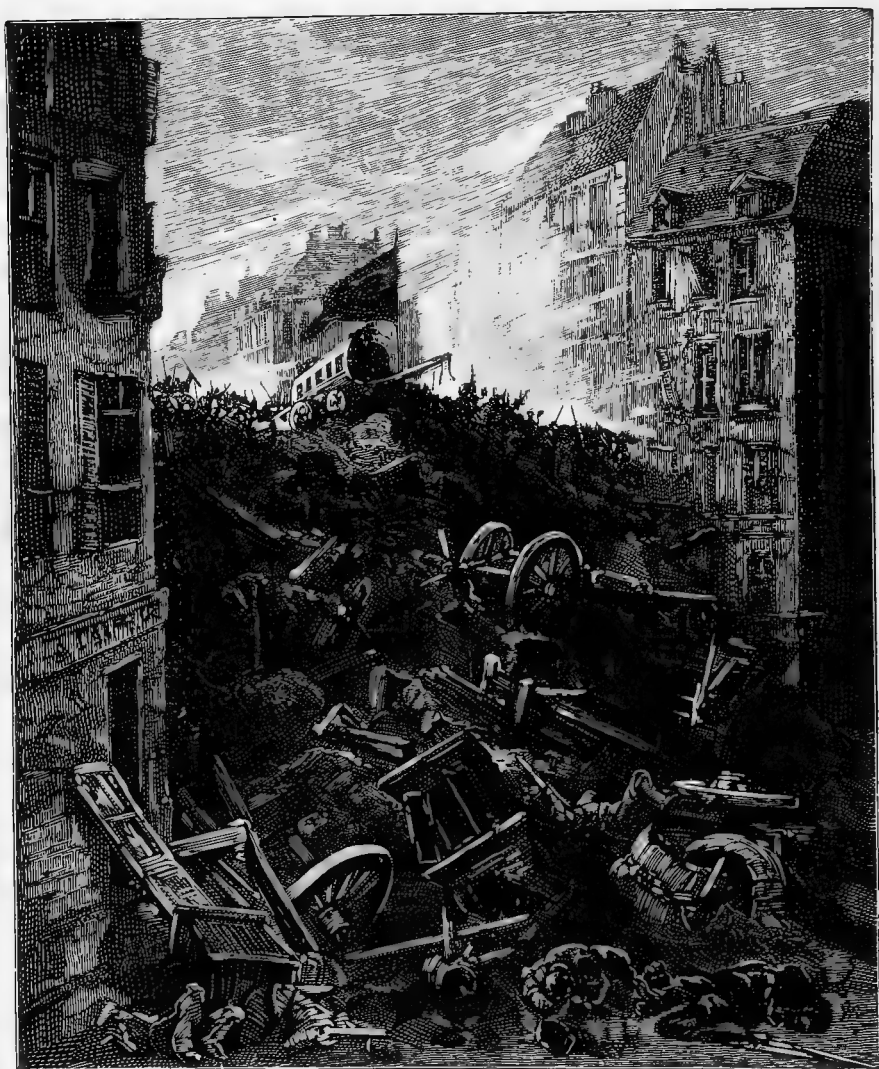
"Oh Lord, Oh Lord !" Mame Hucheloup sighed.

Bossuet ran down to meet Courfeyrac, and Joly, who had gone to the window shouted,

"Courfeyrac, you ought to have brought an umbrella. You will catch cold."

In a few minutes twenty iron bars were pulled down from the railings in front of the inn, and ten yards of pavement dug up. Gavroche and Bahorel seized, as it passed, the truck of a lime-dealer, of the name of Anceau, and found in it three barrels of lime, which they placed under the piles of paving stones ; Enjolras had raised the cellar-flap, and all Mame Hucheloup's empty casks went to join the barrels of lime ; Feuilly, with his fingers accustomed to illuminate the delicate sticks of fans, reinforced the barrels and the trucks with two massive piles of stones. The supporting shores were pulled away from the frontage of an adjoining house, and laid on the casks. When Courfeyrac and Bossuet turned round one-half the street was already barred by a rampart, taller than a man, for there is nothing like the hand of the people to build up anything that is built by demolishing. Matelotte and Gibelotte were mixed up with the workmen, and the latter went backwards and forwards, loaded with rubbish, and her lassitude helped at the barricade. She served paving stones, as she would have served wine, with a sleepy look. An omnibus drawn by two white horses passed the end of the street ; Bossuet jumped over the stones, ran up, stopped the driver, ordered the passengers to get out, offered his hand to "the ladies," dismissed the con-





THE BARRICADE.

ductor, and returned, pulling the horses by the bridles.

"Omnibuses," he said, "must not pass before Corinth. *Non licet omnibus adire Corinthum*"

A moment after the unharnessed horses were straggling down the Rue Mondétour, and the omnibus lying on its side completed the barricade. Mame Hucheloup, quite upset, had sought refuge on the first-floor; her eyes were wandering and looked without seeing and her cries of alarm dared not issue from her throat.

"It is the end of the world," she muttered.

Joly deposited a kiss on Mame Hucheloup's fat, red, wrinkled neck, and said to Grantaire, "My dear fellow, I have always considered a woman's neck an infinitely delicate thing." But Grantaire had reached the highest regions of dithyramb. When Matelotte came up to the first-floor he seized her round the waist, and burst into loud peals of laughter at the window.

"Matelotte is ugly," he cried, "Matelotte is the ideal of ugliness, she is a chimera. Here is the secret of her birth,—a Gothic Pigmalion, who was carving cathedral gargoyles, fell in love on a fine morning with the most horrible of them. He implored love to animate it, and this produced Matelotte. Look at her, citizens! She has chromate-of-lead-colored hair, like Titian's mistress, and is a good girl; I will answer that she fights well, for every good girl contains a hero. As for Mother Hucheloup, she is an old brave; look at her mustachios, she inherited from her husband. She will fight too, and the couple will terrify the whole of the suburbs. Comrades, we will overthrow the government, so truly as there are fifteen intermediate acids between margarid acid and formic acid; however, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me. My father always detested me because I could not understand mathematics; I only understand love and liberty. I am Grantaire, the good fellow; never having had any money, I have not grown accustomed to it, and for that reason have never wanted it; but, had I been rich there would be no poor left! you would have seen! Oh if good hearts had large purses, how much better things would be! I can imagine the Saviour with Rothschild's fortune! what good he would do! Matelotte

embrace me! You are voluptuous and timid; you have cheeks that claim the kiss of a sister, and lips that claim the kiss of a lover!"

"Hold your tongue, barrel!" Courfeyrac said.

Grantaire replied,—

"I am the capitoul and master of the Floral games!"

Enjolras, who was standing on the top of the barricade, gun in hand, raised his handsome, stern face. Enjolras, as we know, blended the Spartan with the Puritan: he would have died at Thermopylæ with Leonidas, and burnt Drogheda with Cromwell.

"Grantaire," he cried, "go and sleep off your wine elsewhere; this is the place for intoxication, and not for drunkenness. Do not dishonor the barricade."

"These angry words produced on Grantaire a singular effect, and it seemed as if he had received a glass of cold water in his face. He appeared suddenly sobered, sat down near the window, gazed at Enjolras with inexpressible tenderness, and said to him.—

"Let me sleep here."

"Go and sleep elsewhere," Enjolras cried.

But Grantaire, still fixing on him his tender and misty eyes answered,—

"Let me sleep here till I die here."

Enjolras looked at him disdainfully.

"Grantaire, you are incapable of believing, thinking, wishing, living, and dying."

Grantaire replied in a grave voice,—

"You will see."

He stammered a few more unintelligible words, then his head fell noisily on the table, and—as is the usual effect of the second period of ebriety into which Enjolras had roughly and suddenly thrust him—a moment later he was asleep.

## CHAPTER CCXXI.

### PREPARATIONS.

BAHOREL, delighted with the barricade, exclaimed,—"How well the street looks when dressed for a ball!"

Courfeyrac, while gradually demolishing the public-house, tried to console the widowed landlady.

"Mother Hucheloup, were you not complaining the other day that you had been



summoned by the police, because Gibelotte shook a counterpane out of the window?"

"Yes, my good Monsieur Courfeyrac. Ah! good gracious! are you going to put that table too in your horror? Yes, and the government also condemned me to a fine of one hundred francs on account of a flower-pot that fell out of the garret into the street. Is that not abominable?"

"Well, Mother Hucheloup, we are going to avenge you."

Mother Hucheloup did not exactly see the advantage accruing to her from the reparation made her. She was satisfied after the fashion of the Arab woman who, having received a box on the ears from her husband, went to complain to her father, crying vengeance, and saying,—“Father, you owe my husband affront for affront.” The latter asked, “On which cheek did you receive the blow?” “On the left cheek.” The father boxed her right cheek, and said, “Now you must be satisfied. Go and tell your husband that he buffeted my daughter, but I have buffeted his wife.” The rain had ceased, and recruits began to arrive. Artisans brought under their blouses a barrel of gunpowder, a hamper containing carboys of vitriol, two or three carnival torches, and a basket full of lamps, “remaining from the king’s birthday,” which was quite recent, as it was celebrated on May 1. It was said that this ammunition was sent by a grocer in the Faubourg St. Antoine of the name of Pepin. The only lantern in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and all those in the surrounding streets, were broken. Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac directed every thing, and now two barricades were erected simultaneously, both of which were supported by Corinth and formed a square; the larger one closed the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and the smaller the Rue Mondétour at the side of Rue du Cygne. This latter barricade, which was very narrow, was merely made of barrels and paving-stones. There were about fifty workmen there, of whom three were armed with guns, for on the road they had borrowed a gunsmith’s entire stock,

Nothing could be stranger or more motley than this group; one had a sleeved waistcoat, a cavalry sabre, and a pair of holster pistols, another was in shirt sleeves, with a round hat, and a powder-flask hung at his side, while a third was cuirassed with nine sheets

of gray paper, and was armed with a saddler’s awl. There was one who shouted, “Let us exterminate to the last, and die on the point of our bayonet!” This man had no bayonet. Another displayed over his coat the belts and pouch of a national guard, with these words sewn in red worsted on the cover—*public order*. There were many muskets, bearing the numbers of legions, few hats, no neck-ties, a great many bare arms, and a few pikes; add to this all ages, all faces, short pale youths and bronzed laborers at the docks. All were in a hurry, and while assisting each other, talked about the possible chances—that they were sure of one regiment, and Paris would rise. These were terrible remarks, with which a sort of cordial joviality was mingled; they might have been taken for brothers, though they did not know each other’s names. Great dangers have this beauty about them, that they throw light on the fraternity of strangers.

A fire was lighted in the kitchen, and men were melting in a bullet-mould, bowls, spoons, forks, and all the pewter articles of the public-house. They drank while doing this, and caps and slugs lay pell-mell on the table with glasses of wine. In the billiard-room Mame Hucheloup, Matelotte, and Gibelotte, variously affected by terror,—as one was brutalized by it, another had her breath stopped, while the third was awakened—were tearing up old sheets and making lint; three insurgents helped them, three hairy, bearded, and mustached fellows, who pulled the linen asunder with the fingers of a sempstress and made them tremble. The tall man, whom Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Enjolras had noticed, as he joined the band at the corner of the Rue des Billettes, was working at the small barricade, and making himself useful. Gavroche was working at the large one, and as for the young man who had waited for Courfeyrac at his lodgings and asked after M. Marius, he disappeared just about the time when the omnibus was overthrown.

Gavroche, who was perfectly radiant, had taken the arrangements on himself; he came, went, ascended, descended, went up again rustled and sparkled. He seemed to be there for the encouragement of all; had he a spur? certainly in his misery: had he wings? certainly in his joy. Gavroche was a whirlwind, he was seen incessantly and constantly heard and he filled the air, being everywhere at

once. He was a sort of almost irritating ubiquity, and it was impossible to stop with him. The enormous barricade felt him on its crupper; he annoyed the idlers, excited the slothful, reanimated the fatigued, vexed the thoughtful, rendered some gay, and gave others time to breathe, set some in a passion, and all in motion; he piqued a student and stung a workman, he halted, then started again, flew over the turmoil and the efforts, leapt from one to the other, murmured, buzzed, and harassed the whole team; he was the fly of the immense revolutionary coach. Perpetual movement was in his little arms, and perpetual clamor in his little lungs.

"Push ahead; more paving-stones, more barrels, more vehicles! where are there any? We want a hod-load of plaster to stop up this hole. Your barricade is very small, and must mount. Put everything into it, smash up the house; a barricade is Mother Gibou's tea. Hilloh! there's a glass door."

This made the workmen exclaim,—

"A glass door! what would you have us do with that, tubercle?"\*

"Hercules yourselves," Gavroche retorted; "a glass door in a barricade is excellent, for, though it does not prevent the attack, it makes it awkward to take it. Have you never boned apples over a wall on which there was broken glass? A glass door cuts the corns of the National Guards when they try to climb up the barricade. By Job! glass is treacherous. Well, you fellows have no very bright imagination."

He was furious with his useless pistol, and went from one to the other, saying,—“A gun! I want a gun! Why don't you give me a gun?"

"A gun for you?" said Combeferre.

"Well, why not?" Gavroche answered; "I had one in 1830, when we quarrelled with Charles X."

Enjolras shrugged his shoulders.

"When all the men have guns we will give them to boys."

Gavroche turned firmly, and answered him,—

"If you are killed before me I will take yours."

"Gamin!" said Enjolras.

"Puppy!" said Gavroche.

A dandy lounging past the end of the

street created a diversion; Gavroche shouted to him,—

"Come to us, young man! what, will you do nothing for your old country?"

The dandy fled.

The journals of the day which stated that the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, that *almost impregnable fortress*, as they called it, reached the level of a first-floor, are mistaken, for the truth is, that it did not exceed an average height of six or seven feet. It was so built that the combatants could, at will, either disappear behind it or ascend to its crest, by means of a quadruple row of paving-stones arranged like steps inside. Externally the front of the barricade, composed of piles of paving-stones and barrels, held together by joists and planks, passed through the wheels of the truck and the omnibus, had a bristling and inextricable appearance. A gap, sufficiently wide for one man to pass, was left between the house wall and the end of the barricade furthest from the wine-shop, so that a sortie was possible. The pole of the omnibus was held upright by ropes, and a red flag fixed to this pole floated over the barricade. The small Mondétour barricade, concealed behind the wine-shop, could not be seen, but the two barricades combined formed a real redoubt. Enjolras and Courfeyrac had not thought it advisable to barricade the other portion of the Rue Mondétour, which opens on to the Hallas, as they doubtless wished to maintain a possible communication with the outside, and had but little fear of being attacked by the difficult and dangerous Rue des Prêcheurs, with the exception of this issue left free, which constituted what Folard would have called in a strategic style, a zigzag, and of the narrow passage in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the interior of the barricade, in which the wine-shop formed a salient angle, presented an irregular quadrilateral, enclosed on all sides. There was a space of twenty yards between the great barricade and the tall houses which formed the end of the street, so that it might be said that the barricade leant against these houses, which were all inhabited, but closed from top to bottom.

All this labor was completed without any obstacle, in less than an hour, during which this handful of men had not seen a single bear-skin-cap or bayonet. The few citizens who still ventured at this moment of riot

\* Gavroche evidently connects "Tubercule" in some offensive manner with "Hercule."

into the Rue St. Denis took a glance into the Rue de la Chanvrière, perceived the barricade, and doubled their pace. When the two barricades were completed and the flag was hoisted, a table was pulled from the wine-shop into the street, and Courfeyrac got upon it. Enjolras brought up the square chest, which Courfeyrac opened, and it proved to be full of cartridges. When they saw these cartridges the bravest trembled, and there was a moment's silence. Courfeyrac distributed the cartridges smilingly, and each received thirty: many had powder, and began making others with the bullets which had been cast; as for the powder barrel, it was on a separate table, near the door, and was held in reserve. The assembly, which was traversing the whole of Paris, did not cease, but in the end it had become a monotonous sound, to which they no longer paid any attention. This noise at one moment retired, at another came nearer, with lugubrious undulations. The guns and carbines were loaded all together, without precipitation and with a solemn gravity. Enjolras then stationed three sentries outside the barricades, one in the Rue de la Chanvrière, the second in the Rue des Prêcheurs, the third at the corner of the Petite Truanderie.

Then, when the barricades were built, the posts assigned, the guns loaded, the sentries set, the insurgents alone in these formidable streets, through which no one now passed, surrounded by dumb and, as it were, dead houses, in which no human movement palpitated, enveloped in the menacing darkness, in the midst of that silence and obscurity in which they felt something advancing, and which had something tragical and terrifying about it, isolated, armed, determined, and tranquil—waited.

## CHAPTER CCXXII.

### THE RECRUIT OF THE RUE DES BILLETES.

DURING the hours of waiting, what did they? we are bound to tell it, because this is historical. While men were making cartridges and the women lint, while a large stewpan full of melted tin and lead, intended for the bullet-mould, was smoking on a red-hot chafing-dish, while the vedettes were watching with shouldered guns on the barricade, while Enjolras, whom it was im-

possible to distract, watched the vedettes, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, Feuilly, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and a few others, assembled, as in the most peaceful days of their student conversations, and in one corner of the wine-shop converted into a casemate, two paces from the barricade which they had raised, and with their loaded and primed muskets leaning against the back of their chairs, these fine young men, so near their last hour, wrote love verses. The hour, the spot, the recollections of youth recalled, a few stars which were beginning to glisten in the sky, the funeral repose of these deserted streets, the imminence of the inexorable adventure which was preparing, gave a pathetic charm to these verses murmured in a low voice in the twilight by Jean Prouvaire, who, as we said, was a gentle poet.

In the meanwhile a lamp had been lit on the small barricade, and on the large one one of those wax torches such as may be seen on Shrove Tuesday in front of the vehicles crowded with masks that are proceeding to the Courtille. These torches, we know, came from Faubourg St. Antoine. The torch was placed in a species of lantern of paving-stones closed on three sides to protect it from the wind, and arranged so that the entire light should fall on the flag. The street and the barricade remained plunged in darkness, and nothing was visible save the red flag formidably illumined, as if by an enormous dark lantern. This light added a strange and terrible purple to the scarlet of the flag.

Night had quite set in, and nothing occurred, only confused rumors and fusillades now and then could be heard, but they were rare, badly maintained, and distant. This respite, which was prolonged, was a sign that the government was taking its time and collecting its strength. These fifty men were waiting for the coming of sixty thousand. Enjolras was attacked by that impatience which seizes on powerful minds when they stand on the threshold of formidable events. He looked up Gavroche, who was busy manufacturing cartridges in the ground floor room by the dubious light of two candles placed on the bar for precaution, on account of the gunpowder sprinkled over the tables. These two candles threw no rays outside, and the insurgents allowed no light in the upper floors. Gavroche was at this moment greatly

occupied, though not precisely with his cartridges.

The recruit from the Rue des Billettes had come into the room and seated himself at the least-lighted table. A Brown Bess of the large model had fallen to his share, and he held it between his legs. Gavroche, up to this moment, distracted by a hundred "amusing" things, had not even seen this man. When he entered Gavroche looked after him, mechanically admiring his musket, but when the man was seated the gamin suddenly rose. Those who might have watched this man would have noticed him observe every thing in the barricade, and the band of insurgents, with singular attention, but when he entered the room he fell into a state of contemplation, and seemed to see nothing of what was going on. The gamin approached the pensive man, and began walking round him on tiptoe, in the same way as people move round a man whom they are afraid of awaking. At the same time all the grimaces of an old man passed over his childish face, at once so impudent and so serious, so giddy and so profound, so gay and so affecting, and these grimaces signified, "Oh stuff! it is not possible, I must see double—I am dreaming—can it be?—no, it is not—yes, it is—no, it is not." Gavroche balanced himself on his heels, clenched his fists in his pockets, moved his neck like a bird, and expended on an enormously outstretched lip all the sagacity of a lower lip. He was stupefied, uncertain, convinced, and dazzled. He looked like the chief of the eunuchs at the slave-market discovering a Venus among the girls, and had the air of an amateur recognizing a Raphael in a pile of daubs. All about him was at work, the instinct that scents and the intellect that combines; it was plain that an event was happening to Gavroche. It was when he was deepest in thought that Enjolras accosted him.

"You are little," he said, "and will not be seen. Go out of the barricades, slip along the houses, pass through as many streets as you can, and come back to tell me what is going on."

Gavroche drew himself up.

"So little ones are good for something? that's lucky! I'm off. In the meanwhile, trust to the little and distrust the big," and Gavroche, raising his head and dropping his

voice, added, as he pointed to the man of the Rue des Billettes,—

"You see that tall fellow?"

"Well?"

"He's a spy."

"Are you sure?"

"Not a fortnight back he pulled me down by the ear from the cornice of the Pont Royal where I was taking the air."

Enjolras hurriedly left the gamin and whispered a few words to a laborer from the wine-docks who was present. The laborer went out and returned almost immediately, followed by three others. The four men, four broad-shouldered porters, stationed themselves silently behind the table at which the man was seated, in evident readiness to fall upon him, and then Enjolras walked up to the man and asked him,—

"Who are you?"

At this sudden question the man started, he looked into the depths of Enjolras' candid eyeballs, and seemed to read his thoughts. He gave a smile, which was at once the most distasteful, energetic and resolute possible, and answered with a haughty gravity,—

"I see what you mean,—well, yes!"

"Are you a spy?"

"I am an agent of the authority!"

"And your name is—?"

"Javert."

Enjolras gave the four men a sign, and in a twinkling, before Javert had time to turn round, he was collared, thrown down, bound, and searched. They found on him a small round card fixed between two pieces of glass, and bearing on one side the arms of France, with the motto, "Surveillance and vigilance," and on the other this notice, "JAVERT, police Inspector, fifty-two years of age," and the signature of the prefect of police of that day, M. Gisquet. He had also a watch and a purse containing some pieces of gold, and both were left him. Behind his watch at the bottom of his fob a paper was found, which Enjolras unfolded, and on which he read these lines, written by the prefect of the police himself,—

"So soon as his political mission is concluded, Javert will assure himself by a special watch whether it is true that criminals assemble on the slope of the right bank of the Seine, near the bridge of Jena."

When the search was ended Javert was raised from the ground, his arms were tied

behind his back, and he was fastened in the middle of the room to the celebrated post, which in olden times gave its name to the wine-shop. Gavroche, who had watched the whole scene and approved of every thing with a silent shake of the head, went up to Javert, and said,—

"The mouse has trapped the cat."

All this took place so quickly that it was completed before those outside the wine-shop were aware of it. Javert had not uttered a cry, but, on seeing him fastened to the post, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Combeferre, Joly, and the men scattered over the two barricades, flocked in, Javert, who was surrounded with cords so that he could not stir, raised his head with the intrepid serenity of a man who never told a falsehood.

"It is a spy," said Enjolras, and turning to Javert, "You will be shot two minutes before the barricade is taken."

Javert replied, with his most imperious accent,—

"Why not at once?"

"We are saving of powder."

"Then settle the affair with a knife."

"Spy," said the beautiful Enjolras, "we are judges, and not assassins."

Then he called Gavroche.

"You be off now and do what I told you."

"I am off," Gavroche cried, but stopped just as he reached the door.

"By the way, you will give me his gun. I leave you the musician but I want his clarionette."

The gamin gave a military salute, and gayly slipped round the large barricade.

## CHAPTER CCXXIII.

### WAS HIS NAME LE CABUC?

THE tragical picture we have undertaken would not be complete, the reader would not see in their exact and real relief those great moments of social lying-in and revolutionary giving birth, in which there are throes blended with effort, if we were to omit in our sketch an incident full of an epic and stern horror, which occurred almost immediately after Gavroche's departure.

Bands of rioters, it is well known, resemble a snowball, and as they roll along, agglomerate many tumultuous men, who do not ask

each other whence they come. Along the passers-by who joined the band led by Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac, there was a man wearing a porter's jacket, much worn at the shoulders, who gesticulated and vociferated, and had the appearance of a drunken savage. This man, whose name or nickname was Le Cabuc, and entirely unknown to those who pretended to know him, was seated, in a state of real or feigned intoxication, with four others, round a table which they had dragged out of the wine-shop. This Cabuc, while making the others drink, seemed to be gazing thoughtfully at the large house behind the barricade, whose five stories commanded the whole street, and faced the Rue St. Denis. All at once he exclaimed,—

"Do you know what, comrades? we must fire from that house. When we are at the windows, hang me if any one can come up the street."

"Yes, but the house is closed," said one of the drinkers.

"We'll knock."

"They won't open."

"Then we'll break in the door."

"Le Cabuc ran up to the door, which had a massive knocker and rapped; as the door was not opened he rapped again, and no one answering, he gave a third rap, but the silence continued.

"Is there any one in here?" Le Cabuc shouted. But nothing stirred and so he seized a musket and began hammering the door with the butt end. It was an old, low, narrow, solid door, made of oak, lined with sheet iron inside and a heavy bar, and a thorough postern gate. The blows made the whole house tremble, but did not shake the door. The inhabitants, however, were probably alarmed, for a little square trap-window was at length lit up and opened on the third story, and a candle and the gray-haired head of a terrified old man, who was the porter appeared in the orifice. The man who was knocking left off.

"What do you want gentlemen?" the porter asked.

"Open the door!" said Le Cabuc

"I cannot gentlemen."

"Open, I tell you!"

"It is impossible, gentlemen."

Le Cabuc raised his musket and took aim at the porter, but as he was below and it was very dark the porter did not notice the fact.

"Will you open? yes or no?"

"No, gentlemen."

"You really mean it?"

"I say no, my kind——"

The porter did not finish the sentence, for the musket was fired; the bullet entered under his chin and came out of his neck, after passing through the jugular vein. The old man fell in a heap, without heaving a sigh, the candle went out, and nothing was visible save a motionless head lying on the sill of the window, and a small wreath of smoke ascending to the roof,

"There," said Le Cabuc, as he let the butt of the musket fall on the pavement again.

He had scarce uttered the word ere he felt a hand laid on his shoulder with the tenacity of an eagle's talon, and he heard a voice saying to him,—

"On your knees!"

The murderer turned, and saw before him Enjolras' white, cold face, Enjolras held a pistol in his hand, and hurried up on hearing the shot fired, and clutched with his left hand Le Cabuc's blouse, shirt and braces.

"On your knees," he repeated.

And with a sovereign movement the frail young man of twenty bent like a reed the muscular and robust porter, and forced him to kneel in the mud. La Cabuc tried to resist, but he seemed to have been seized by a superhuman hand. Enjolras, pale, bare-neck, with his dishevelled hair and feminine face, had at this moment I know not what of the ancient Themis. His dilated nostrils, his downcast eyes, gave to his implacable Greek profile that expression of wrath and that expression of chastity which, in the opinion of the old world, are becoming to justice. All the insurgents had hurried up, and then ranged themselves in a circle, at a distance, feeling that it was impossible for them to utter a word in the presence of what they were going to see. Le Cabuc, conquered no longer attempted to struggle, and trembled all over: Enjolras loosed his grasp, and took out his watch.

"Pray or think!" he said, "you have one minute to do so."

"Mercy!" the murderer stammered, then hung his head and muttered a few inarticulate execrations.

Enjolras did not take his eyes off the watch: he let the minute pass, and then put the watch again in his fob. This done, he

seized Le Cabuc by the hair, who clung to his knees with a yell, and placed the muzzle of the pistol to his ear. Many of these intrepid men, who had so tranquilly entered upon the most frightful adventures, turned away their heads. The explosion was heard, the assassin fell on his head on the pavement, and Enjolras drew himself up, and looked round him with a stern air of conviction. Then he kicked the corpse and said,—

"Throw this outside."

Three men raised the body of the wretch, which was still writhing in the last mechanical convulsions of expiring life, and threw it over the small barricade into the Mondétour lane. Enjolras stood pensive; some grand darkness was slowly spreading over his formidable serenity. Presently he raised his voice, and all were silent.

"Citizens," said Enjolras, "what that man did is frightful, and what I have done is horrible; he killed, and that is why I killed, and I was obliged to do so, as insurrection must have its discipline. Assassination is even more of a crime here than elsewhere, for we stand under the eye of the revolution, we are the priests of the republic, we are the sacred victims to duty, and we must not do aught that would calumniate our combat. I, therefore, tried and condemned this man to death; for my part, constrained to do what I have done, but abhorring it, I have also tried myself, and you will shortly see what sentence I have passed."

All who listened trembled.

"We will share your fate," Combeferre exclaimed.

"Be it so!" Enjolras continued. "One word more. In executing that man I obeyed Necessity; but necessity is a monster of the old world, and its true name is Fatality. Now it is the law of progress that monsters should disappear before angels, and Fatality vanish before Fraternity. It is a bad moment to utter the word love, but no matter, I utter it, and I glorify it. Love, thou hast a future; Death, I make use of thee, but I abhor thee. Citizens, in the future there will be no darkness, no thunder-claps; neither ferocious ignorance, nor bloodthirsty retaliation; and as there will be no Satan left, there will be no St. Michael. In the future no man will kill another man, the earth will be radiant, and the human race will love. The day will come, citizens, when

all will be concord, harmony, light, joy, and life, and we are going to die in order that it may come."

Enjolras was silent, his virgin lips closed, and he stood for some time at the spot where he had shed blood, in the motionlessness of a marble statue. His fixed eyes caused people to talk in whispers around him. Jean Prouvaire and Combeferre shook their heads silently, and leaning against each other in an angle of the barricade, gazed, with an admiration in which there was compassion, at this grave young man, who was an executioner and priest, and had at the same time the light and the hardness of crystal. Let us say at once, that after the action, when the corpses were conveyed to the morgue and searched, a police-agent's card was found on Le Cabuc; the author of this work had in his hands in 1848 the special report on this subject made to the prefect of police in 1832. Let us add that, if we may believe a strange but probably well-founded police tradition, Le Cabuc was Claquesous. It is certainly true that after the death of Cabuc, Claquesous was never heard of again, and left no trace of his disappearance. He seemed to have become amalgamated with the invisible; his life had been gloom, and his end was night. The whole insurgent band was still suffering from the emotion of this tragical trial, so quickly begun and so quickly ended, when Courfeyrac saw again at the barricade the short young man who had come to his lodgings to ask for Marius; this lad, who had a bold and reckless look, had come at night to rejoin the insurgents.

#### CHAPTER CCXXIV.

##### FROM THE RUE PLUMET TO THE RUE ST. DENIS.

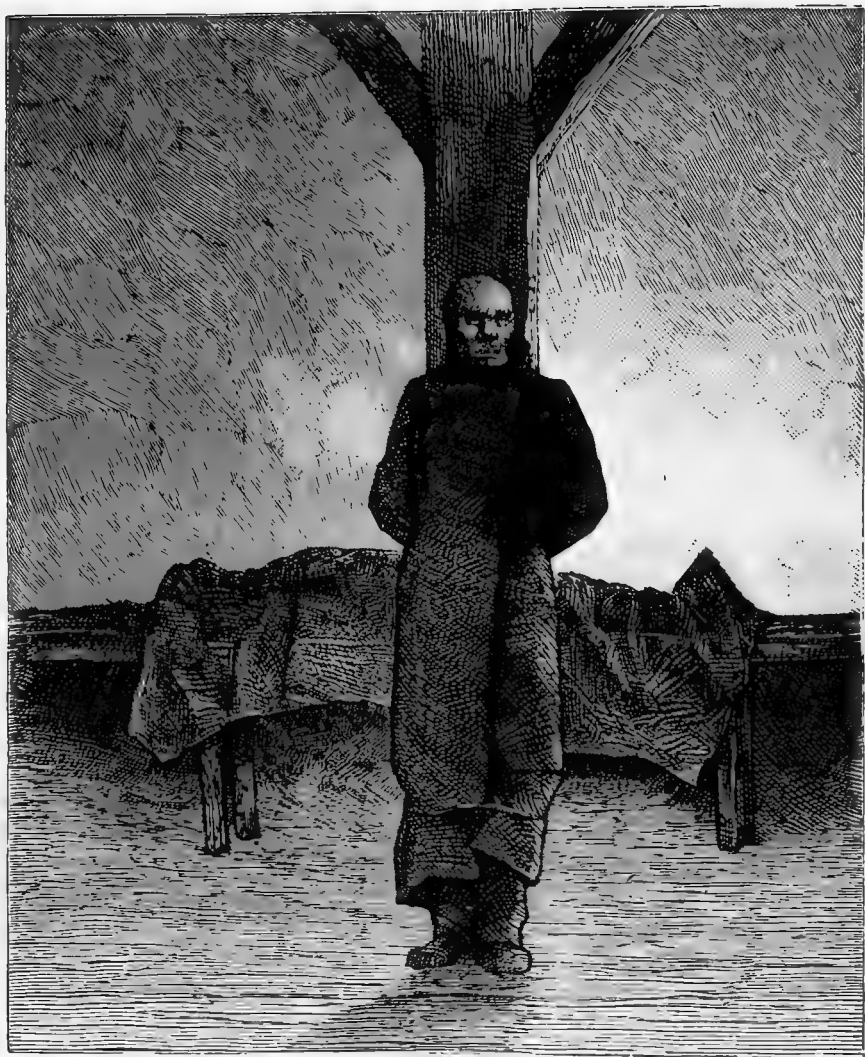
THE voice which summoned Marius through the twilight to the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrière had produced on him the effect of the voice of destiny. He wished to die, and the opportunity offered; he rapped at the door of the tomb, and a hand held out the key to him from the shadows. Such gloomy openings in the darkness just in front of despair are tempting; Marius removed the bar which had so often allowed him to pass, left the garden, and said, "I will go." Mad with grief, feeling nothing fixed and solid in his brain, incapable of accepting any thing

henceforth of destiny, after the two months spent in the intoxication of youth and love, and crushed by all the reveries of despair at once, he had only one wish left,—to finish with it all at once. He began walking rapidly, and he happened to be armed, as he had Javert's pistols in his pocket. The young man whom he fancied that he had seen had got out of his sight in the streets.

Marius, who left the Rue Plumet by the boulevard, crossed the esplanade and bridge of the Invalides, the Champs Elysées, the square of Louis XV., and reached the Rue de Rivoli. The shops were open there, the gas blazed under the arcades, ladies were making purchases, and people were eating ices at the Café Latier and cakes at the English pastrycook's. A few postchaises, however, were leaving at a gallop the Hotel des Princes and Meurice's. Marius entered the Rue St. Honoré by the passage Delorme. The shops were closed there, the tradesmen were conversing before their open doors, people walked along, the lamps were lighted, and from the first floor upwards the houses were illuminated as usual. Cavalry were stationed on the square of the Palais Royal. Marius followed the Rue St. Honoré, and the further he got from the Palais Royal the fewer windows were lit up; the shops were entirely closed, nobody was conversing on the thresholds, the street grew darker, and at the same time the crowd denser, for the passer-by had now become a crowd. No one could be heard speaking in the crowd, and yet a hollow, deep buzzing issued from it. Near the Arbre sec Fountain there were mobs motionless, and sombre groups standing among the comers and goers like stones in the middle of a running stream. At the entrance of the Rue des Prouvaires, the crowd no longer moved, it was a resisting, solid, compact, almost impenetrable mob of persons packed together and conversing in a low voice. There were hardly any black coats or round hats present, only fustian jackets, blouses, caps, and bristling beards. This multitude undulated confusedly in the night mist, and its whispering had the hoarse accent of a rustling, and though no one moved, a tramping in the mud could be heard. Beyond this dense crowd there was not a window lit up in the surrounding streets, and the solitary and decreasing rows of lanterns could only be seen in them. The







JAVERT AT THE POST.

Hugo. vol. III., p. 62.

street-lanterns of that day resembled large red stars suspended from ropes, and cast on to the pavement a shadow which had the shape of a large spider. These streets, however, were not deserved, and piled muskets, moving bayonets, and troops bivouacing could be distinguished in them. No curious person went beyond this limit, and circulation ceased there; there the mob ended and the army began.

Marius wished with the will of a man who no longer hopes; he had been summoned and was bound to go. He found means to traverse the crowd and bivouacking troops; he hid himself from the patrols and avoided the sentries. He made a circuit, came to the Rue de Béthisy, and proceeded in the direction of the Halles; at the corner of the Rue des Bourdonnais the lanterns ceased. After crossing the zone of the mob he passed the border of troops, and now found himself in something frightful. There was not a wayfarer, nor a soldier, nor a light, nothing but solitude, silence, and night, and a strangely-piercing cold; entering a street was like entering a cellar. Still he continued to advance. Some one ran close past him; was it a man? a woman? were there more than one? He could not have said, for it had passed and vanished. By constant circuits he reached a lane, which he judged to be the Rue de la Poterie, and toward the middle of the lane came across an obstacle. He stretched out his hands and found that it was an overturned cart, and his feet recognized pools of water, holes, scattered and piled-up paving stones—it was a barricade which had been begun and then abandoned. He clambered over the stones and soon found himself on the other side of the obstacle; he walked very close to the posts, and felt his way along the house-walls. A little beyond the barricade he fancied that he could see something white before him, and on drawing nearer it assumed a form. It was a pair of white horses, the omnibus horses, unharnessed by Bossuet in the morning, which had wandered, hap-hazard, from street to street all day, and at last stopped here, with the stolid patience of animals which no more comprehend the actions of man than man comprehends the actions of Providence. Marius left the horses behind him, and as he entered a street which seemed to be the Rue du Contrat-social, a musket-shot, which came no one could say whence,

and traversed the darkness at hazard, whizzed close past him, and pierced above his head a copper shaving-dish, hanging from a hair-dresser's shop. In 1846, this dish with the hole in it was still visible at the corner of the pillars, of the Halles. This shot was still life, but from this moment nothing further occurred the whole itineracy resembled a descent down black steps, but for all that Marius did not the less advance.

Any being hovering over Paris at this moment, with the wings of a bat or an owl, would have had a gloomy spectacle under his eyes. The entire old district of the Halles, which is like a city within a city, which is traversed by the Rues St. Denis and St. Martin, and by a thousand lanes which the insurgents had converted into their redoubt and arsenal, would have appeared like an enormous black hole dug in the centre of Paris. Here the eye settled on an abyss, and, owing to the broken lamps and closed shutters, all brilliancy, life, noise, and movement had ceased in it. The invisible police of the revolt were watching everywhere and maintaining order, that is to say, night. To hide the small number in a vast obscurity, and to multiply each combatant by the possibilities which this obscurity contains is the necessary tactics of the insurrection, and at nightfall every window in which a candle gleamed received a bullet; the light was extinguished, and sometimes the occupant killed. Hence, nothing stirred; there was naught but terror, mourning, and stupor in the houses, and in the streets a sort of sacred horror. Not even the long rows of windows and floors, the network of chimneys and roofs, and the vague reflections which glisten on the muddy and damp pavement, could be perceived. The eye which had looked down from above on this mass of shadow might perhaps have noticed here and there indistinct gleams which made the broken and strange lines, and the profile of singular buildings, stand out, something like flashes flitting through ruins—at such spots were the barricades. The rest was a lake of darkness and mystery, oppressive and funereal, above which motionless and mournful outlines rose, the tower of St. Jaques, St. Merry church, and two or three other of those grand edifices of which man makes giants and night phantoms. All around this deserted and alarming labyrinth, in those districts where the circulation of

Paris was not stopped, and where a few lamps glistened, the aerial observer would have distinguished the metallic scintillation of bayonets, the dull rolling of artillery, and the buzz of silent battalions which was augmented every moment—it was a formidable belt, slowly contracting and closing in on the revolt.

The invested district was now but a species of monstrous cavern, every thing seemed there asleep or motionless, and, as we have seen, each of the streets by which it could be approached only offered darkness. It was a stern darkness, full of snares, full of unknown and formidable collisions, into which it was terrifying to penetrate, and horrible to remain; where those who entered shuddered before those who awaited them, and those who awaited shuddered before those who were about to come. Invisible combatants were entrenched at the corner of every street, like sepulchral traps hidden in the thickness of night. It was all over,—no other light could be hoped for there henceforth save the flash of musketry, no other meeting than the sudden and rapid apparition of death. Where? how? when? they did not know, but it was certain and inevitable: there, as the spot marked out for the contest, the government and the insurrection, the National Guards and the popular society, the bourgeoisie and the rioters were about to grope their way toward each other. There was the same necessity for both sides, and the only issue henceforth possible was to be killed or conquer. It was such an extreme situation, such a powerful obscurity, that the most timid felt resolute and the most daring terrified. On both sides, however, there was equal fury, obstinacy, and determination; on one side advancing was death, and no one dreamed of recoiling; on the other remaining was death, and no one thought of flying. It was necessary that all should be over by the morrow, that the victory should be with one side or the other, and the insurrection either become a revolution or a riot. The government understood this as well as the partisans, and the smallest tradesmen felt it. Hence came an agonizing thought with the impenetrable gloom of this district, where all was about to be decided; hence came a redoubled anxiety around this silence, whence a catastrophe was going to issue. Only one sound could be heard, a sound as heart-rend-

ing as a death-rattle, and as menacing as a malediction, the tocsin of St. Merry. Nothing could be so chilling as the clamor of this distracted and despairing bell, as it lamented in the darkness.

As often happens, nature seemed to have come to an understanding with what men were going to do, and nothing deranged the mournful harmonies of the whole scene. The stars had disappeared, and heavy clouds filled the entire horizon with their melancholy masses. There was a black sky over these dead streets, as if an intense pall were cast over the immense tomb. While a thoroughly political battle was preparing on the same site which had already witnessed so many revolutionary events,—while the youth, the secret associations, and the schools, in the name of principles, and the middle classes in the name of interests, were coming together to try a final fall,—while everybody was hurrying up and appealing to the last and decisive hour of the crisis, in the distance and beyond that fatal district, at the lowest depths of the unfathomable cavities of that old wretched Paris, which is disappearing under the splendor of happy and opulent Paris, the gloomy voice of the people could be heard hoarsely growling. It is a startling and sacred voice, composed of the yell of the brute and the word of God, which terrifies the weak and warns the wise, and which at one comes from below like the voice of the lion, and from above like the voice of thunder.

## CHAPTER CCXXV.

### THE EXTREME DRINK.

MARIUS had reached the Halles; there all was calmer, darker, and even more motionless than in the neighboring streets. It seemed as if the frozen peace of the tomb had issued from the ground and spread over the sky. A ruddy tinge, however, brought out from the black background the tall roofs of the houses which barred the Rue de la Chanvrerie on the side of St. Eustache. It was the reflection of the torch burning on the Corinth barricade, and Marius walked toward that ruddy hue; it led him to the Marché-aux-Poirées, and he caught a glimpse of the Rue des Prêcheurs, into which he turned. The sentry of the insurgents watching at the

other end did not notice him; he felt himself quite close to what he was seeking, and he walked on tip-toe. He thus reached the corner of that short piece of the Mondétour lane which was, as will be remembered, the sole communication which Enjolras had maintained with the outer world. At the corner of the last house on his left, he stopped and peeped into the lane. A little beyond the dark corner formed by the lane and the Rue de la Chanvrière, which formed a large patch of shadow, in which he was himself buried, he noticed a little light on the pavement, a portion of a wine-shop, a lamp flickering in a sort of shapeless niche, and men crouching down with guns on their knees,—all this was scarce ten yards from him, and was the interior of the barricade. The houses that lined the right-hand side of the lane hid from him the rest of the wine-shop, the large barricade, and the flag. Marius had but one step to take, and then the unhappy young man sat down on a post, folded his arms, and thought of his father.

He thought of that heroic Colonel Pontmercy, who had been such a proud soldier, who had defended under the republic the frontier of France, and touched under the empire the frontier of Asia; who had seen Genoa, Alessandria, Milan, Turin, Madrid, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, and Moscow; who had left on all the victorious battlefields of Europe drops of the same blood which Marius had in his veins; who had grown gray before age in discipline and command; who had lived with his waist-belt buckled, his epaulettes falling on his chest, his cockade blackened by smoke, his brow wrinkled by his helmet, in barracks, in camp, in bivouacs, and in hospitals, and who, at the expiration of twenty years, had returned from the great wars with his scarred cheek and smiling face, simple, tranquil, admirable, pure as an infant, having done every thing for France, and nothing against her. He said to himself that his own day had now arrived, that his hour had at length struck, that after his father he too was going to be brave, intrepid, and bold, to rush to meet bullets, offer his chest to the bayonets, shed his blood, seek the enemy, seek death; that he in his turn was about to wage war and go into the battlefield, and that the battle he would enter was the street, and the war he was about to wage civil war! He saw civil war opening like a gulf before

him, and that he was going to fall into it; then he shuddered.

He thought of his father's sword which his grandfather had sold to the old clothes-dealer, and which he had so painfully regretted. He said to himself that this valiant and chaste sword had done well to escape from him and disappear angrily in the darkness; that it fled away thus because it was intelligent, and foresaw the future,—the riots, the war of gutters, the war of paving-stones, fusillades from cellar-traps, and blows dealt and received from behind; that, coming from Marengo and Austerlitz, it was unwilling to go to the Rue de la Chanvrière, and after what it had done with the father refused to do that with the son! He said to himself that if that sword had been here, it, after receiving it at his dead father's bedside, he had dared to take it, and carry it into this nocturnal combat between Frenchmen in the streets, it would assuredly have burned his hands, and have flashed before him like the glaive of the archangel! He said to himself that it was fortunate it was not there, but had disappeared,—that this was well, this was just, that his grandfather had been the true guardian of his father's glory, and that it was better for the colonel's sword to have been put up to auction, sold to the second-hand dealer, or broken up as old iron, than come to-day to make the flank of the country bleed. And then he began weeping bitterly. It was horrible, but what was he to do? he could not live without Cosette, and since she had departed all left him was to die. Had he not pledged her his word of honor that he would die? She had gone away knowing this, and it was plain that she was pleased with Marius' dying; and then it was clear that she no longer loved him, since she had gone away thus without warning him, without a word, without a letter and yet she knew his address! Of what use was it to live? and why should he live now? And then, to have come so far and then recoil! to have approached the danger and run away! to have come to look at the barricade and then slip off, trembling, and saying, "After all I have had enough of that. I have seen it, that is sufficient, it is civil war, and I will be off." To abandon his friends who expected him, who perhaps had need of him, who were a handful against an army! To be false to every thing at once,—to love, to friendship,

to his word! to give his poltroonery the pretext of patriotism! Oh, that was impossible, and if his father's phantom were there in the shadows, and saw him recoil, it would lash him with the flat of its sabre, and cry to him "Forward, coward!"

A prey to this oscillation of his thoughts, he hung his head, but suddenly raised it again, for a species of splendid rectification had just taken place in his mind. There is a dilatation of thought peculiar to the vicinity of the tomb; and to be near death makes a man see correctly. The vision of the action upon which he saw himself perhaps on the point of entering no longer appeared to him lamentable, but superb; the street was become transfigured by some internal labor of the soul before his mental eye. All the tumultuous notes of interrogation of reverie crowded back upon him, but without troubling him, and he did not leave a single one unanswered. Why would his father be indignant? are there not cases in which insurrection attains to the dignity of duty? what was there degrading for the son of Colonel Pontmercy in the combat which was about to commence? It is no longer Montmirail or Champaubert, it is something else; is it no longer a question of a sacred territory, but of a holy idea. The country complains; be it so, but humanity applauds. Is it true, besides, that the country complains? France bleeds, but liberty smiles, and on seeing the smile of liberty France forgets her wound. And then, regarding things from a higher point still, what did people mean by talking of a civil war?

What is the meaning of civil war? is there such a thing as a foreign war? Is not every war between men a war between brothers? War can only be qualified by its object, and there is neither foreign war nor civil war, there is only just or unjust war. Up to the day when the great human concordant is concluded, war, at least that which is the effort of the hurrying future against the laggard past, may be necessary. What reproach can be urged against such a war? war does not become a disgrace, or the sword a dagger, until it assassinates right, progress, reason, civilization, and truth. In such a case, whether civil war or foreign war, it is iniquitous, and is called crime. Beyond that holy thing justice, what right would one form of war have to despise another? by what right would

the sword of Washington ignore the pike of Camille Desmoulins? Which is the greater, Leonidas contending against the foreigner or Timoleon against the tyrant? one is the defender, the other is the liberator. Must we brand, without investigating the object, every taking up of arms in the interior of a city? if so, mark with contumely Brutus, Marcel, Arnould of Blankenheim, and Coligny. A war of thickets? a street war? why not? such was the war of Ambiorix, of Artevelde, of Marnix, and Pelagius. But Ambiorix struggled against Rome, Artevelde against France, Marnix against Spain, and Pelagius against the Moors, all against the foreigner. Well, monarchy is the foreigner, oppression is the foreigner, divine right is the foreigner, and despotism violates the moral frontier as invasion does the geographical frontier. Expelling the tyrant or expelling the English is, in either case, a reconquest of territory. An hour arrives when a protest is insufficient; after philosophy action is needed, living strength completes what the idea has sketched out. Prometheus vincit begins, Aristogiton ends, the Encyclopædia enlightens minds, and August 10 electrifies them. After Æschylus, Thrasybulus; after Diderot, Danton. Multitudes have a tendency to accept the master, and their mass deposits apathy. A crowd is easily led into habits of obedience. These must be stirred up, impelled, and roughly treated by the very blessing of their deliverance, their eyes be hurt by the truth and light hurled at them in terrible handfuls. They must themselves be to some extent thunderstruck by their own salvation, for such a dazzling awakes them. Hence comes the necessity of tocsins and wars; it is necessary that great combatants should rise, illumine nations by audacity, and shake up that sorry humanity over which divine right, Cæsar's glory, strength, fanaticism, irresponsible power, and absolute majesties cast a shadow,—a mob stupidly occupied in contemplating these gloomy triumphs of the night in their crepuscular splendor. But what? whom are you talking of? do you call Louis Philippe the tyrant? no, no more than Louis XVI. These are both what history is accustomed to call good kings, but principles cannot be broken up, the logic of truth is rectilinear, and its peculiarity to be deficient in complaining; no concession therefore; every encroachment on man must be re-

pressed: there is the right divine in Louis XVI., there is the "because of a Bourbon" in Louis Philippe; both represent to a certain extent the confiscation of right, and they must be combated in order to sweep away universal usurpation; it must be so, for France is always the one who begins, and when the master falls in France he falls everywhere. In a word, what cause is more just, and consequently what war is greater, than to re-establish social truth, give back its throne to liberty, restore the people to the people and the sovereignty to man, to replace the crown on the head of France, to restore reason and equity in their plenitude, to suppress every germ of antagonism by giving back individuality, to annihilate the obstacle which the royalty offers to the immense human concord, and to place the human race again on a level with right? Such wars construct peace. An enormous fortalice of prejudice, privileges, superstitions, falsehoods, exactions, abuses, violences, iniquities, and darknesses, is still standing on the earth with its towers of hatred, and it must be thrown down, and the monstrous mass crumble away. To conquer at Austerlitz is great, but to take the Bastille is immense.

No one but will have noticed in himself that the mind—and this is the marvel of its unity complicated with ubiquity—has the strange aptitude of reasoning almost coldly in the most violent extremities, and it often happens that weird passions and deep despair, in the very agony of their blackest soliloquies, handle subjects and discuss theses. Logic is mingled with the convulsion, and the thread of syllogism runs without breaking through the storm of thoughts:—such was Marius' state of mind. While thinking thus, crushed, but resolute, and yet hesitating and shuddering at what he was going to do, his eyes wandered about the interior of the barricade. The insurgents were conversing in whispers, without moving, and that almost silence which marks the last phase of expectation was perceptible. Above them, at a third-floor window, Marius distinguished a species of spectator or of witness, who seemed singularly attentive,—it was the porter killed by Le Cabuc. From below this head could be vaguely perceived in the reflection of the torch burning on the barricade, and nothing was stranger in this dense and vacillating light, than this motionless, livid, and amazed

face, with its bristling hair, open and fixed eyes and gaping mouth, bending over the street in an attitude of curiosity. It might be said that this dead man was contemplating those who were going to die. A long stream of blood which had flowed from his head, descended from the window to the first floor, where it stopped.

## CHAPTER CCXXVI.

## THE FLAG.

NOTHING came yet: it had struck ten by St. Merry's, and Enjolras and Combeferre were sitting musket in hand near the sally port of the great barricade. They did not speak, but were listening, trying to catch the dullest and most remote sound of marching. Suddenly, in the midst of this lugubrious calm, a clear, young, gay voice, which seemed to come from the Rue St. Denis, burst forth, and began singing distinctly, to the old popular tune of *Au clair de la lune*, these lines, terminating with a cry that resembled a cock-crow.

Mon nez est en larmes,  
Mon ami Bugeaud,  
Prêt'-moi tes gendarmes  
Pour leur dire un mot.  
En capote bleue,  
La poule au shake,  
Voici la banlieue  
Co-cocorico!

They shook hands.

"'Tis Gavroche," said Enjolras.

"He is warning us," said Combeferre.

Hurried footsteps troubled the deserted streets, and a being more active than a clown was seen climbing over the omnibus, and Gavroche leaped into the square, out of breath, and saying,—

"My gun! here they are."

An electric shudder ran along the whole barricade, and the movement of hands seeking guns was heard.

"Will you have my carbine?" Enjolras asked the gamin.

"I want the big gun," Gavroche answered, and took Javert's musket.

Two sentries had fallen back and came in almost simultaneously with Gavroche; they were those from the end of the street and the Petite Truanderie. The vedette in the lane des Prêcheurs remained at his post, which indicated that nothing was coming from the

direction of the bridges and the Halles. The Rue de la Chanvrière, in which a few paving-stones were scarce visible in the reflection of the light cast on the flag, offered to the insurgents the aspect of a large black gate vaguely opened in a cloud of smoke. Every man proceeded to his post: forty-three insurgents, among whom were Enjolras, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and Gavroche, knelt behind the great barricade, with the muzzles of their guns and carbines thrust out between the paving-stones as through loop-holes, attentive, silent, and ready to fire. Six, commanded by Feuilly, installed themselves at the upper windows of Corinth. Some minutes more elapsed, and then a measured, heavy tramp of many feet was distinctly heard from the direction of St. Leu; this noise, at first faint, then precise, and then heavy and re-echoing, approached slowly without halt or interruption, and with a tranquil and terrible continuity. Nothing was audible but this; it was at once the silence and noise of the statue of the commandatore, but the stormy footfall had something enormous and multiple about it which aroused the idea of a multitude at the same time as that of a spectre; you might have fancied that you heard the fearful statue Legion on the march. The tramp came nearer, nearer still, and then ceased; and the breathing of many men seemed to be audible at the end of the street. Nothing, however, was visible, though quite at the end in the thick gloom could be distinguished a multitude of metallic threads, fine as needles and almost imperceptible, which moved about like that indescribable phosphoric network which we perceive under our closed eyelids just at the moment when we are falling asleep. These were bayonets and musket barrels on which the reflection of the torch confusedly fell. There was another pause, as if both sides were waiting. All at once a voice which was the more sinister because no one could be seen, and it seemed as if the darkness itself was speaking shouted,—

“Who goes there?”

At the same time the click of muskets being cocked could be heard. Enjolras replied with a sonorous and haughty accent,—

“The French Revolution.”

“Fire!” the voice commanded.

A flash lit up all the frontages in the

street, as if the door of a furnace had been suddenly opened and shut, and a frightful shower of bullets hurled against the barricade, and the flag fell. The discharge had been so violent and dense that it cut the staff asunder, that is to say, the extreme point of the omnibus pole. Bullets ricochetting from the corners of the houses penetrated the barricade and wounded several men. The impression produced by this first discharge was chilling; the attack was rude, and of a nature to make the boldest think. It was plain that they had to do with a whole regiment at the least.

“Comrades,” Courfeyrac cried, “let us not waste our powder, but wait till they have entered the street before returning their fire.”

“And before all,” Enjolras said, “let us hoist the flag again!”

He picked up the flag which had fallen at his feet: outside the ring of ramrods in barrels could be heard,—the troops were reloading. Enjolras continued,—

“Who has a brave heart among us?” who will plant the flag on the barricade again?”

Not one replied, for to mount the barricade at this moment, when all the guns were doubtless again aimed at it, was simply death, and the bravest man hesitates to condemn himself. Enjolras even shuddered as he repeated,—

“Will no one offer?”

Since the arrival at Corinth and the barricade had been begun no one paid any further attention to Father Mabeuf. M. Mabeuf, however had not quitted the insurgents: he had gone into the ground-floor room of the wine-shop and seated himself behind the bar, where he was, so to speak, annihilated in himself. He seemed no longer to see or think. Courfeyrac and others had twice or thrice accosted him, warning him of the peril and begging him to withdraw, but he had not appeared to hear them. When no one was speaking to him his lips moved as if he were answering some one, and so soon as people addressed him his lips left off moving, and his eyes no longer seemed alive. A few hours before the barricade was attacked he had assumed a posture which he had not quitted since, with his two hands on his knees, and his head bent forward, as if he were looking into a precipice. Nothing

could have drawn him out of this attitude, and it did not appear as if his mind were in the barricade. When every one else went to his post, the only persons left in the room were Javert tied to the post, an insurgent with drawn sabre watching over Javert, and Mabœuf. At the moment of the attack, at the detonation, the physical shock affected and as it were awoke him: he suddenly rose, crossed the room, and at the moment when Enjolras repeated his appeal, "Does no one offer?" the old man was seen on the threshold of the wine-shop. His presence produced a species of commotion in the groups, and the cry was raised,—

"It is the voter, the conventionalist, the representative of the people!"

He probably did not hear it: he walked straight up to Enjolras, the insurgents making way for him with a religious fear, tore the flag from Enjolras, who recoiled with petrification, and then, no one daring to arrest or help him, this old man of eighty, with shaking head, but firm step, slowly began ascending the staircase of paving-stones formed inside the barricade. This was so gloomy and so grand that all around him cried, "Off with your hats." With each step he ascended the scene became more frightful, his white hair, his decrepit face, his tall, bald, and wrinkled forehead, his hollow eyes, his amazed and open mouth, and his old arm raising the red banner, stood out from the darkness and were magnified in the sanguinary brightness of the torch, and the spectators fancied they saw the spectre of '93 issuing from the ground, holding the flag of terror in its hand. When he was on the last step, when this trembling and terrible phantom, standing on the pile of ruins, in the presence of twelve hundred invisible gun-barrels, stood facing death, and as if stronger than it, the whole barricade assumed a supernatural and colossal aspect in the darkness. There was one of those silences which only occur at the sight of prodigies, and in the midst of the silence the old man brandished the red flag and cried,—

"Long live the revolution! long live the republic! fraternity! equality! and death!"

A low and quick talking, like the murmur of a hurried priest galloping through a mass, was heard,—it was probably the police commissary making the legal summons at the

other end of the street; then the same loud voice which had shouted "Who goes there" cried,—

"Withdraw!"

M. Mabœuf, livid, haggard, with his eyeballs illumined by the mournful flames of mania, raised the flag about his head and repeated,—

"Long live the republic."

"Fire!" the voice commanded.

A second discharge, resembling a round of grape-shot, burst against the barricade; the old man sank on his knees, then rose again, let the flag slip from his hand, and fell back on the pavement like a log, with his arms stretched out like a cross. Streams of blood flowed under him, and his old, pale, melancholy face seemed to be gazing at heaven. One of those emotions stronger than man, which makes him forget self-defence, seized on the insurgents, and they approached the corpse with respectful horror.

"What men these regicides are!" said Enjolras.

Courfeyrac whispered in Enjolras' ear,—

"This is only between ourselves, as I do not wish to diminish the enthusiasm, but this man was anything rather than a regicide. I knew him, and his name was Mabœuf. I do not know what was the matter with him to-day, but he was a brave idiot. Look at his head."

"The head of an idiot and the heart of Brutus!" Enjolras replied, then he raised his voice.

"Citizens! such is the example which the old give to the young. We hesitated and he came; we recoiled and he advanced. This is what those who tremble with old age teach those who tremble with fear! This aged man is august before his country; he has had a long life and a magnificent death. Now let us place his corpse under cover, let each of us defend this dead old man as he would defend his living father, and let his presence in the midst of us render the barricade impregnable!"

A murmur of gloomy and energetic adhesion followed these words. Enjolras bent down, raised the old man's head, and sternly kissed him on the forehead; then, stretching out his arms and handling the dead man with tender caution, as if afraid of hurting him, he took off his coat, pointed to the blood-stained holes, and said,—



"This is our flag now!"

A long black shawl of Widow Hucheloup's was thrown over Father Mabœuf: six men made a litter of their muskets, the corpse was laid on them, and they carried it with bare heads and solemn slowness to a large table in the ground-floor room. These men, entirely engaged with the grave and sacred thing they were doing, did not think of the perilous situation in which they were, and when the corpse was carried past the stoical Javert, Enjolras said to the spy,—

"Your turn will come soon."

During this period little Gavroche, who alone had not left his post, and had remained on the watch, he fancied he could see men creeping up to the barricade: all at once he cried, "Look out!" Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Jean Prouvaire, Combeferre, Joly, Bahorel, and Bossuet, all hurried tumultuously out of the wine-shop, but it was almost too late; for they saw a flashing line of bayonets undulating on the crest of the barricade. Municipal Guards of tall stature penetrated, some by striding over the omnibus, others through the sallyport, driving before them the gamin, who fell back, but did not fly. The moment was critical; it was that first formidable minute of inundation when the river rises to the level of the dam and the water begins to filter through the fissures of the dyke. One second more and the barricade was captured. Bahorel dashed at the first Municipal Guard who entered, and killed him with a shot from his carbine; the second killed Bahorel with a bayonet-thrust. Another had already levelled Courfeyrac, who was shouting Help! while the tallest of all of them, a species of Colossus, was marching upon Gavroche, with his bayonet at the charge. The gamin raised in his little arms Javert's enormous musket, resolutely aimed at the giant, and pulled the trigger. But the gun did not go off, as Javert had not loaded it: the Municipal Guard burst into a laugh, and advanced upon the lad. Before the bayonet had reached Gavroche, however, the musket fell from the soldier's hands, for a bullet struck him in the middle of the forehead, and he fell on his back. A second bullet struck the other guard who attacked Courfeyrac, in the middle of the chest, and laid him low.

The shots were fired by Marius who had just entered the barricade.

## CHAPTER CCXXVII.

### THE BARREL OF GUNPOWDER.

MARIUS, still concealed at the corner of the Rue Mondétour, had watched the first phase of the combat with shuddering irresolution. Still he was unable to resist for any length of time that mysterious and sovereign dizziness which might be called the appeal from the abyss: and at the sight of the imminence of the peril, of M. Mabœuf's death, that mournful enigma, Bahorel killed, Courfeyrac shouting for help, this child menaced, and his friends to succor or revenge, all hesitation vanished, and he rushed into the medley, pistols in hand. With the first shot he saved Gavroche, and with the second delivered Courfeyrac. On hearing the shots, and the cries of the guards, the assailants swarmed up the entrenchment, over the crest of which could now be seen more than half the bodies of Municipal Guards, troops of the line, and National Guards from the suburbs, musket in hand. They already covered more than two-thirds of the barricade, but no longer leapt down into the enclosure, and hesitated, as if they feared some snare. They looked down into the gloomy space as they would have peered into a lion's den; and the light of the torch only illumined bayonets, bearskin shakos, and anxious and irritated faces.

Marius had no longer a weapon, as he had thrown away his discharged pistols, but he had noticed the barrel of gunpowder near the door of the ground-floor room. As he half turned to look in that direction a soldier levelled his musket at him, and at the moment when the soldier was taking steady aim at Marius, a hand was laid on the muzzle of the musket and stopped it up; the young workman in the velvet trousers had rushed forward. The shot was fired, the bullet passed through the hand, and probably through the workman, for he fell, but did not hit Marius. Marius, who was entering the wine-shop, hardly noticed this; still he had confusedly seen the gun pointed at him, and the hand laid on the muzzle, and had heard the explosion. But in minutes like this things that men see vacillate, and they do not dwell on any thing, for they feel themselves obscurely impelled toward deeper shadows still, and all is mist. The insur-

gents, surprised but not terrified, had rallied, and Enjolras cried, "Wait, do not throw away your shots!" and, in truth, in the first moment of confusion they might wound each other. The majority had gone up to the first floor and attic windows, whence they commanded the assailants, but the more determined, with Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, and Combeferre, were haughtily standing against the houses at the end, unprotected, and facing the lines of soldiers and guards who crowded the barricade. All this was done without precipitation, and with this strange and menacing gravity which precedes a combat; on both sides men were aiming at each other within point-blank range, and they were so near that they could converse. When they were at the point where the spark was about to shoot forth, an officer wearing a gorget and heavy epaulettes stretched out his sword and said,—

"Throw down your arms!"

"Fire!" Enjolras commanded.

The two detonations took place at the same moment, and everything disappeared in smoke, a sharp and stifling smoke, in which the dying and wounded writhed, with faint and hollow groans. When the smoke dispersed, the two lines of combatants could be seen thinned, but at the same spot, and silently reloading their guns. All at once a thundering voice was heard shouting,—

"Begone, or I will blow up the barricade!"

All turned to the quarter whence the voice came.

Marius had entered the wine-shop, fetched the barrel of gunpowder, and then, taking advantage of the smoke and obscure mist which filled the entrenched space, glided along the barricade up to the cage of paving-stones in which the torch was fixed. To tear out the torch, place in its stead the barrel of gunpowder, throw down the pile of paving-stones on the barrel, which was at once unheaded with a sort of terrible obedience, had only occupied so much time as stooping and rising again; and now all, National Guards, Municipal Guards, officers and privates, collected at the other end of the barricade gazed at him in stupor, as he stood with one foot on the paving-stones, the torch in his hand, his haughty face illumined by a fatal resolution, approaching the flame of the torch to the formidable heap, in which the broken

powder-barrel could be distinguished, and uttering the terrifying cry,—

"Begone, or I will blow up the barricade!"

Marius on this barricade after the octogenarian, was the vision of the young revolution after the apparition of the old one.

"Blow up the barricade!" a sergeant said, "and yourself too!"

Marius answered, "And myself too!"

And he lowered the torch to the barrel of gunpowder; but there was no one left on the barricade; the assailants, leaving their dead and their wounded, fell back pell-mell and in disorder to the end of the street, and disappeared in the night. It was the *saute qui peut*, and the barricade was saved. All surrounded Marius, and Courfeyrac fell on his neck.

"Here you are!"

"What happiness!" said Combeferre.

"You arrived just in time," said Bossuet.

"Were it not for you I should be dead!"

Courfeyrac remarked.

"Without you I should have been goosed," Gavroche added.

Marius added,—

"Who is the leader?"

"Yourself," Enjolras replied.

Marius the whole day through had had a furnace in his brain, but now it was a tornado, and this tornado which was in him produced on him the effect of being outside him and carrying him away. It seemed to him as if he were already an immense distance from life, and his two luminous months of joy and love suddenly terminated at this frightful precipice. Cosette lost to him, this barricade, M. Mabœuf letting himself be killed for the republic, himself chief of the insurgents—all these things seemed to him a monstrous nightmare, and he was obliged to make a mental effort in order to remind himself that all which surrounded him was real. Marius had not lived long enough yet to know that nothing is so imminent as the impossible, and what must be always foreseen is the unforeseen. He witnessed the performance of his own drama, as if it were a piece of which he understood nothing. In his mental fog he did not recognize Javert, who, fastened to his post, had not made a movement of his head during the attack on the barricade, and saw the revolt buzzing round him with the resignation of a martyr and the majesty of a judge. In the meanwhile, the assail-

ants no longer stirred; they could be heard marching and moving at the end of the street, but did not venture into it, either because they were waiting for orders, or else required reinforcements, before rushing again upon this impregnable redoubt. The insurgents had posted sentries, and some who were medical students had begun dressing wounds. All the tables had been dragged out of the wine-shop, with the exception of the two reserved for the lint and the cartridges, and the one on which Father Mabœuf lay; they had been added to the barricade, and the mattresses off the beds of Widow Hucheloup and the girls had been put in their place. On these mattresses the wounded were laid; as for the three poor creatures who inhabited Corinth, no one knew what had become of them, but they were at length found hidden in the cellar,—“Like lawyers,” Bossuet said; and added, “Women, fie!”

A poignant emotion darkened the joy of the liberated barricade, the roll-call was made, and one of the insurgents was missing. Who was he? one of the dearest and most valiant, Jean Prouvaire. He was sought for among the dead, but was not there; he was sought for among the wounded, and was not there; he was evidently a prisoner. Combeferre said to Enjolras,—

“They have our friend, but we have their agent; do you insist on the death of this spy?”

“Yes,” Enjolras replied, “but less than the life of Jean Prouvaire.”

This was said in the bar-room close to Javert's post.

“Well,” Combeferre continued, “I will fasten a handkerchief to my cane, and go as a flag of truce to offer to give their man for our man.”

“Listen,” said Enjolras, as he laid his hand on Combeferre's arm.

There was a meaning click of guns at the end of the street, and a manly voice could be heard crying,—

“Long live France! long live the future!”

They recognized Prouvaire's voice; a flash passed and a detonation burst forth; then the silence returned.

“They have killed him,” Combeferre exclaimed.

Enjolras looked at Javert and said to him,—

“Your friends have just shot you.”

## CHAPTER CCXXVIII.

### THE AGONY OF DEATH AND THE AGONY OF LIFE.

It is a singularity of this sort of war, that the attack on barricades is almost always made in the front, and that the assailants generally refrain from turning positions, either they suspect ambushes, or are afraid to enter winding streets. The whole attention of the insurgents was, consequently directed to the great barricade, which was evidently the constantly threatened point, and the contest would infallibly recommence there. Marius, however, thought of the little barricade, and went to it; it was deserted, and only guarded by the lamp which flickered among the paving-stones. However, the Mondétour lane and the branches of the little Trunanderie were perfectly calm. As Marius, after making his inspection, was going back, he heard his name faintly uttered in the darkness.—

“Monsieur Marius!”

He started, for he recognized the voice which had summoned him two hours back through the garden railings in the Rue Plumet, but this voice now only seemed to be a gasp; he looked around him and saw nobody. Marius fancied that he was mistaken, and that it was an illusion added by his mind to the extraordinary realities which were pressing round him. He took a step to leave the remote angle in which the barricade stood.

“Monsieur Marius!” the voice repeated; this time he could not doubt, for he had heard distinctly; he looked around him but saw nothing.

“At your feet,” the voice said.

He stooped down, and saw in the shadow a form crawling toward him on the pavement. It was the speaker. The lamp enabled him to distinguish a blouse, torn cotton-velvet trousers, bare feet, and something that resembled a pool of blood; Marius also caught a glimpse of a pale face raised to him, and saying,—

“Do you not recognize me?”

“No.”

“Eponine.”

Marius eagerly stooped down; it was really that hapless girl dressed in male clothes.

“What brought you here; what are you doing?”

"Dying," she said to him.

There are words and incidents that wake up crushed beings; Marius cried with a start,—

"You are wounded! wait, I will carry you into the wine-shop! your wound will be dressed! is it serious? how shall I catch hold of you so as not to hurt you? where is it you suffer? Help, good God! but what did you come to do here?"

And he tried to pass his hand under her to lift her, and as he did so he touched her hand—she uttered a faint cry.

"Have I hurt you?" Marius asked.

"A little."

"But I only touched your hand."

She raised her hand to Marius' eyes, and he could see a hole right through it.

"What is the matter with your hand?" he said.

"It is pierced."

"Pierced?"

"Yes."

"What with?"

"A bullet."

"How?"

"Did you see a musket aimed at you?"

"Yes, and a hand laid on the muzzle."

"It was mine."

Marius shuddered.

"What madness! poor child! but all the better, if that is your wound, it is nothing, so let me carry you to a bed. Your wound will be dressed, and people do not die of a bullet through the hand."

She murmured,—

"The bullet passed through my hand but came out of my back, so it is useless to move me from here. I will tell you how you can do me more good than a surgeon; sit down by my side on that stone."

He obeyed; she laid her head on his knees, and without looking at him, said,—

"Oh, how good that is, how comforting! There! I do not suffer now."

She remained silent for a moment, then turned her head with an effort, and gazed at Marius.

"Do you know what, M. Marius? it annoyed me that you entered that garden, though it was very foolish of me, as I showed you the house, and then, too, I ought to have remembered that a young gentleman like you,—"

She broke off, and leaping over the gloomy

transitions which her mind doubtless contained, she added with a heart-rending smile,—

"You thought me ugly, did you not?"

Then she continued,—

"You are lost, and no one will leave the barricade now. I brought you here you know, and you are going to die, I feel sure of it. And yet when I saw the soldier aiming at you, I laid my hand on the muzzle of his gun. How droll that is, but the reason was that I wished to die with you. When I received that bullet I dragged myself here, and as no one saw me I was not picked up. I waited for you and said, 'Will he not come?' Oh, if you only knew how I bit my blouse, for I was suffering so terribly, but now I feel all right. Do you remember the day when I came into your room and looked at myself in your glass, and the day when I met you on the boulevard near the washer-women? how the birds sang, and it is not so very long ago. You gave me five francs, and I said to you 'I do not want your money.' I hope you picked up your coin, for you are not rich, and I did not think of telling you to pick it up. The sun was shining and it was not at all cold. Do you remember, M. Marius? Oh, I am so happy, for everybody is going to die."

She had a wild, grave, and heart-rending look, and her ragged blouse displayed her naked throat. While speaking, she laid her wounded hand on her chest, in which there was another hole, and whence every moment a stream of blood spirted like a jet of wine from an open bung. Marius gazed at this unfortunate creature with profound compassion.

"Oh!" she suddenly continued, "it is coming back: I choke!"

She raised her blouse and bit it, and her limbs stiffened on the pavement. At this moment Gavroche's crowing voice could be heard from the barricade: the lad had got on to a table to load his musket, and was gayly singing the song so popular at that day,—

"En voyant Lafayette,

Le gendarme réplète :

Sauvons-nous! sauvons-nous! sauvons-nous!"

Eponine raised herself and listened, then she muttered,—

"It is he,"

And turning to Marius, added,—

"My brother is here but he must not see me, or he will scold me."

"Your brother?" Marius asked, as he thought most bitterly and sadly of the duties toward the Thénardiens which his father had left him; "which is your brother?"

"That little fellow."

"The one who is singing?"

"Yes."

Marius made a move.

"Oh, do not go away," she said, "it will not be long just now."

She was almost sitting up, but her voice was very low, and every now and then interrupted by the death-rattle. She put her face as close as she could to that of Marius, and added with a strange expression,—

"Come, I will not play you a trick: I have had a letter addressed to you in my pocket since yesterday. I was told to put it in the post, but kept it, as I did not wish it to reach you. But, perhaps, you will not be angry with me when we meet again ere long, for we shall meet again, shall we not? Take your letter."

She convulsively seized Marius' hand with her wounded hand, but seemed no longer to feel the suffering. She placed Marius' hand in her blouse pocket, and he really felt a paper.

"Take it," she said.

Marius took the letter, and she gave a nod of satisfaction and consolation.

"Now, for my trouble; promise me—"

And she stopped.

"What?" Marius asked.

"Promise me!"

"I do promise!"

"Promise to kiss me on the forehead when I am dead—I shall feel it."

She let her head fall again on Marius' knees and her eyes closed—he fancied the poor soul departed. Eponine remained motionless, but all at once, at the moment when Marius believed her eternally asleep, she slowly opened her eyes, on which the gloomy profundity of death was visible, and said to him with an accent whose gentleness seemed already to come from another world,—

"And then, Monsieur Marius, I think that I was a little bit in love with you."

She tried to smile once more, and expired.

## CHAPTER CCXXIX.

### GAVROCHE CALCULATES DISTANCES.

MARIUS kept his promise; he deposited a kiss on this livid forehead, upon which an icy perspiration beaded. It was not an infidelity to Cosette, but a pensive and sweet farewell to an unhappy soul. He had not taken without a quiver the letter which Eponine gave him; for he at once suspected an event in it, and was impatient to read it. The heart of man is so constituted,—and the unfortunate child had scarce closed her eyes ere Marius thought of unfolding the paper. He gently laid her on the ground and went off, for something told him that he could not read this letter in the presence of a corpse. He walked up to a candle on the ground-floor room; it was a little note folded and sealed with the elegant care peculiar to women. The address was in a feminine handwriting, and ran,—

"To Monsieur, Monsieur Marius Pontmercy, at M. Courfeyrac's, No. 16, Rue de la Verrerie."

He broke the seal and read:

"My well-beloved,—Alas, my father insists on our going away at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7 Rue de l'Homme Armé, and within a week in London.—COSETTE.—June 4."

Such was the innocence of their love, that Marius did not even know Cosette's handwriting.

What had happened may be told in a few words. Eponine had done it all. After the night of June 3 she had had a double thought,—to foil the plans of her father and the bandits upon the house in the Rue Plumet, and separate Marius and Cosette. She had changed rags with the first scamp she met, and thought it amusing to dress up as a woman, while Eponine disguised herself as a man. It was she who gave Jean Valjean the expressive warning, and he had gone straight home and said to Cosette, "We shall start this evening and go to the Rue de l'Homme Armé with Toussaint. Next week we shall be in London." Cosette, startled by this unexpected blow, had hastily written two lines to Marius, but how was she to put the letter in the post? She never went out alone, and Toussaint, surprised by such an errand, would certainly show the letter to M.

Fauchelevant. In this state of anxiety, Cosette noticed through the railings Eponine in male clothes, who now incessantly prowled round the garden. Cosette had summoned "this young workman," and gave him the letter and a five-franc piece, saying,—“Carry this letter at once to its address,” and Eponine put the letter in her pocket. The next day she went to Courfeyrac’s and asked for Marius, not to hand him the letter, but “to see,” a thing which every jealous, loving soul will understand. There she waited for Marius, or at any rate Courfeyrac—always to see. When Courfeyrac said to her, “We are going to the barricades,” an idea crossed her mind—to throw herself into this death as she would have done into any other, and thrust Marius into it. She followed Courfeyrac, assured herself of the spot where the barricade was being built; and, feeling certain, since Marius had not received the letter, that he would go at nightfall to the usual meeting-place, she went to the Rue Plumet, waited for Marius there, and gave him that summons in the name of his friends, which, as she thought, must lead him to the barricade. She reckoned on Marius’ despair when he did not find Cosette, and she was not mistaken, and then she returned to the Rue de la Chanvrière. We have just seen what she did there; she died with the tragic joy of jealous hearts, which drag the beloved down to death with them and say, “No one shall have him!”

Marius covered Cosette’s letter with kisses; she loved him then! and for a moment he had an idea that he ought not to die, but then he said to himself, “Her father is taking her to England, and my grandfather will not give his consent to the marriage; no change has taken place in fatality.” Dreamers like Marius undergo such supreme despondencies, and desperate resolves issue from them; the fatigue of living is insupportable, and death is sooner over. Then he thought that two duties were left him to accomplish; inform Cosette of his death, and send her his last farewell, and save him from the imminent catastrophe which was preparing that poor boy, Eponine’s brother and Thénardier’s son. He had a pocket-book about him, the same which had contained the paper on which he had written so many love-thoughts for Cosette; he tore out a leaf, and wrote in pencil these few lines,—

“Our marriage was impossible; I asked

my grandfather’s consent, and he refused to give it; I have no fortune, nor have you. I ran to your house, and did not find you there you remember the pledge I made you, and I have kept it. I die. I love you, and when you read this, my soul will be near you, and smile upon you.”

Having nothing with which to seal this letter, he merely folded it, and wrote on it the address,—

“To Mademoiselle Cosette Fauchelevant, at M. Fauchelevant’s No 7, Rue de l’Homme Armé.”

The letter folded he stood for a moment in thought, then opened his pocket-book again, and wrote with the same pencil these lines on the first page.

“My name is Marius Pontmercy. Carry my body to my grandfather, M. Gillenormand No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire, in the Marais.”

He returned the book to his coat pocket, and then summoned Gavroche. The lad on hearing Marius’ voice, ran up with his joyous and devoted face.

“Will you do something for me?”

“Every thing,” said Gavroche. “God of Gods! My goose would have been cooked without you.”

“You see this letter?”

“Yes.”

“Take it. Leave the barricade at once (Gavroche began scratching his ear anxiously) and to-morrow morning you will deliver it at its address, No. 7, Rue de l’Homme Armé.”

The heroic lad replied,—

“Well, but during that time the barricade will be attacked and I shall not be here,”

“The barricade will not be attacked again till daybreak, according to all appearance, and will not be taken till to-morrow afternoon.”

The new respite which the assailants granted to the barricade was really prolonged; it was one of those intermittences frequent in night fights which are always followed by redoubled obstinacy.

“Well,” said Gavroche, “suppose I were to deliver your letter to-morrow morning?”

“It will be too late, for the barricade will probably be blockaded, all the issues guarded, and you will be unable to get out. Be off at once.”

Gavroche could not find any reply, so he stood there undecided, and scratching his head sorrowfully. All at once he seized the

letter with one of those bird-like movements of his.

"All right," he said.

And he ran off toward the Mondétour lane. Gavroche had an idea which decided him, but which he did not mention; it was the following:

"It is scarce midnight, the Rue de l'Homme Armé is no great distance off. I will deliver the letter at once, and be back in time."

## CHAPTER CCXXX.

### THE TREACHEROUS BLOTTING-BOOK.

What are the convulsions of a city compared with the convulsions of a soul? man is even a greater profundity than the people. Jean Valjean at this very moment was suffering from a frightful internal earthquake, and all the gulfs were re-opened within him. He too was quivering like Paris, on the threshold of a formidable and obscure revolution. A few hours had sufficed to cover his destiny and his conscience with shadows, and of him, as of Paris, it might be said, "The two principles are face to face." The white angel and the black angel are about to wrestle with each other on the brink of the abyss; which will hurl the other down?

On the evening of that same day, Jean Valjean, accompanied by Cosette and Toussaint, proceeded to the Rue de l'Homme Armé, where a tremendous incident was fated to take place. Cosette had not left the Rue Plumet without an attempt at resistance, and for the first time since they had lived together the will of Cosette and the will of Jean Valjean had shown themselves distinct, and had contradicted each other, though they did not come into collision. There was objection on one side and inflexibility on the other; for the abrupt advice to move, thrown to Jean Valjean by a stranger, alarmed him to such a point as to render him absolute. He fancied himself tracked and pursued, and Cosette was compelled to yield. The pair reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé without exchanging a syllable, for each was so deep in personal thought, while Jean Valjean was so anxious that he did not notice Cosette's sadness, and Cosette was so sad that she did not notice Jean Valjean's anxiety. Jean Valjean had brought Toussaint with him, which he had never done in his previous absences, but he

foresaw that he might possibly never return to the Rue Plumet, and he could neither leave Toussaint behind him nor tell her his secret. Moreover, he felt her to be devoted and sure; the treachery of a servant to a master begins with curiosity, and Toussaint, as if predestined to be Jean Valjean's servant, was not curious. She was wont to say through her stammering in her patois of a Barneville peasant, "I am so, I do my work, and the rest does not concern me." In his departure from the Rue Plumet, which was almost a flight, Jean Valjean took away with him nothing but the fragrant little portmanteau, christened by Cosette the *inseparable*. Packed trunks would have required porters, and porters are witnesses; a hackney-coach had been called to the gate in the Rue de Babylone, and they went away in it. It was with great difficulty that Toussaint obtained permission to pack up a little stock of linen and clothes, and a few toilet articles; Cosette, herself, only took her desk and blotting-book. Jean Valjean, in order to heighten the solitude and mystery of this disappearance, had so arranged as to leave the Rue Plumet at nightfall which had given Cosette the time to write her note to Marius. They reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé when it was quite dark, and went to bed in perfect silence.

The apartments in this street were situated on a second floor in a back-yard, and consisted of two bed-rooms, a dining-room, and a kitchen adjoining, with a closet in which was a flock-bed, that fell to the lot of Toussaint. The dining-room was at the same time ante-room and separated the two bed-rooms, and the apartments were provided with the necessary articles of furniture. Human nature is so constituted that men become reassured almost as absurdly as they are alarmed; hence Jean Valjean had scarce reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé ere his anxiety cleared away and was gradually dissipated. There are calming places which act to some extent mechanically on the mind, and when a street is obscure the inhabitants are peaceful. Jean Valjean felt a contagious tranquillity in this lane of old Paris, which is so narrow that it is barred against vehicles by a cross-beam, which is dumb and deaf amid the noisy town, full of twilight in broad daylight, and, so to speak, incapable of feeling emotions between its two rows of aged houses, which are silent, as old people

generally are. There is in this street a stagnant oblivion, and Jean Valjean breathed again in it, for how was it possible that he could be found there? His first care was to place the *inseparable* by his side; he slept soundly, and night counsels, we might add, night appeases. The next morning he woke up almost gay. He considered the dining-room charming, though it was hideous, for it was furnished with an old round table, a low sideboard, surmounted by a mirror, a rickety easy chair, and a few chairs encumbered with Toussaint's parcels. In one of these parcels Jean Valjean's National Guard uniform could be seen through an opening.

As for Cosette, she ordered Toussaint to bring a basin of broth to her bed-room, and did not make her appearance till evening. At about five o'clock, Toussaint, who went about very busy with this small moving, placed a cold fowl on the dinner-table which Cosette consented to look at, through deference for her father. This done, Cosette, protesting a persistent headache, said good-night to Jean Valjean, and shut herself up in her bed-room. Jean Valjean ate a wing of the fowl with appetite, and with his elbows on the table, and gradually growing reassured, regained possession of his serenity. While he was eating this modest dinner, he vaguely heard twice or thrice stammering Toussaint say to him, "There is a disturbance, sir, and people are fighting in Paris." But, absorbed in a multitude of internal combinations, he had paid no attention to her; truth to tell, he had not heard her. He rose and began walking from the door to the window, and from the window to the door in calmness. Cosette, his sole preoccupation, reverted to his mind, not that he was alarmed by this headache, a slight nervous attack, a girl's pouting, a momentary cloud, which would disappear in a day or two, but he thought of the future, and, as usual, thought of it gently. After all, he saw no obstacle to his happy life resuming its course: at certain hours every thing seems impossible, at others every thing appears easy, and Jean Valjean was in one of those good hours. They usually arrive after bad hours, as day does after night, through that law of succession and contrast which is the basis of our nature, and which superficial minds call antithesis. In this peaceful street where he had sought shelter, Jean Valjean freed himself from all

that had troubled him for some time past, and from the very fact that he had seen so much darkness he was beginning to perceive a little azure. To have left the Rue Plumet without any complication or incident was a good step gained, and perhaps it would be wise to leave the country, were it only for a few months, and go to London. Well, they would go; what did he care whether he were in England or France, provided that he had Cosette by his side? Cosette was his nation, Cosette sufficed for his happiness, and the idea that he perhaps did not suffice for Cosette's happiness, that idea which had formerly been his fever and sleeplessness, did not even present itself to his mind. All his past sorrows had collapsed, and he was in the centre of optimism. Cosette, being by his side, seemed to be his, and this is an optical effect which everybody has experienced. He arranged in his mind, and with all possible facility, the departure for England with Cosette, and he saw his felicity re-constructed, no matter where, in the prospectives of his reverie.

While slowly walking up and down, his eyes suddenly fell on something strange. He noticed, facing him in the inclined mirror over the sideboard, and read distinctly,—

"My well-beloved. Alas! my father insists on our leaving at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé, and within a week in London.—Cosette, June 4th."

Jean Valjean stopped with haggard gaze. Cosette, on arriving, had laid her blotting-book on the sideboard, facing the mirror, and, immersed in her painful thoughts, had forgotten it there, without even noticing that she had left it open at the very page on which she had dried the few lines she had written and intrusted to the young workman passing along the Rue Plumet. The writing was imprinted on the blotting-paper and the mirror reflected the writing. The result was what is called in geometry a symmetric image, so that the writing reversed on the blotting-paper was placed straight in the mirror, and offered its natural direction, and Jean Valjean had before his eyes the letter written on the previous evening by Cosette to Marius. It was simple and crushing. Jean Valjean walked up to the mirror and read the lines again, but did not believe in them. They produced on him the effect of appearing



in a flash of lightning: it was an hallucination—it was impossible—it was not. Gradually his perception became more precise, he looked at Cosette's blotting-book, and the feeling of the real fact returned to him. He took up the blotting-book, said, "It comes from that." He feverishly examined the lines imprinted on the blotting-paper, but as they ran backward he could see no meaning in the strange scrawl. Then he said to himself, "Why, it means nothing, there is nothing written there." And he drew a long breath with inexpressible relief. Who has not felt such wild delight in horrible moments? the soul does not surrender to despair till it has exhausted every illusion.

He held the book in his hand and gazed at it, stupidly happy, almost ready to laugh at the hallucination of which he had been the dupe. All at once his eyes fell again on the mirror, and he saw the vision again; the lines stood on it with inexorable clearness. This time it was no mirage, it was palpable, it was the writing turned straight in the mirror, and he comprehended the fact. Jean Valjean tottered, let the blotting-book slip from his grasp, and fell into the old easy-chair by the side of the sideboard with hanging head and glassy, wandering eye. He said to himself that it was evident that the light of this world was eclipsed, and that Cosette had written that to somebody. Then he heard his soul, which had become terrible again, utter a hoarse roar in the darkness. Just attempt to take from the lion the dog he has in his cage! Strange, and sad to say, at that moment Marius had not yet received Cosette's letter, and accident had treacherously carried it to Jean Valjean before delivering it to Marius. Jean Valjean up to that day had never been conquered by a trial; he had been subjected to frightful assaults, not a blow of evil fortune had been spared him, and the ferocity of fate, armed with all social revenge and contempt, had taken him for its victim and ferociously attacked him. He had accepted, when it was necessary, every extremity; he had surrendered his reacquired inviolability as man, given up his liberty, risked his head, lost everything and suffered everything, and he had remained disinterested and stoical, to such an extent that at times he seemed to be oblivious of self like a martyr. His conscience, hardened to all possible assaults of

adversity, might seem quite impregnable, but any one who had now gazed into his heart would have been compelled to allow that it was growing weak. In truth, of all the tortures he had undergone in this long trial to which fate subjected him, this was the most formidable, and never had such a vice held him before. Alas! the supreme trial, we may say the sole trial, is the loss of the being whom we love.

Poor old Jean Valjean did not assuredly love Cosette otherwise than as a father, but, as we have already remarked, the very widowhood of his life had introduced all the forms of love into his paternity; he loved Cosette as his daughter, loved her as his mother, and loved her as his sister, and, as he had never had a mistress or a wife, that feeling too, the most clinging of all, was mingled with the others, vague, ignorant, pure with the purity of blindness, unconscious, heavenly, angelic, and divine, less as a feeling than an instinct, less as an instinct than an attraction, imperceptible, invisible, but real; and love, properly so called, was in his enormous tenderness for Cosette as the vein of gold is in the mountain, dark and virginal. Our readers must study for a moment this state of the heart; no marriage was possible between them, not even that of souls, and yet it is certain that their destinies were wedded. Excepting Cosette, that is to say, excepting a childhood, Jean Valjean, during the whole of his life, had known nothing about things that may be loved. Those passions and loves which succeed each other had not produced in him those successive stages of green, light green, or dark green, which may be noticed on leaves that survive the winter, and in men who pass their fiftieth year. In fine, as we have more than once urged, all this internal fusion, all this whole, whose resultant was a lofty virtue, ended by making Jean Valjean a father to Cosette. A strange father, forged out of the grandsire, the son, the brother, and the husband, which were in Jean Valjean; a father in whom there was even a mother; a father who loved Cosette and adored her, and who had this child for his light, his abode, his family, his country, and his paradise. Hence, when he saw that it was decidedly ended, that she was escaping from him, slipping through his fingers, concealing herself, that she was a cloud, that she was water, when he

had before his eyes this crushing evidence, another is the object of her heart, another is the wish of her life, she has a lover, I am only the father, I no longer exist,—when he could no longer doubt, when he said to himself, “She is leaving me,” the sorrow he experienced went beyond the limits of the possible. To have done all that he had done to attain this! and to be nothing! Then, as we have just stated, he had a quivering of revolt from head to foot; he felt even in the roots of his hair the immense reawaking of selfishness, and the “I” yelled in the depths of this man’s soul.

There are such things as internal earthquakes; the penetration of a desperate certainty into a man is not effected without removing and breaking certain profound elements which are at times the man himself. Grief, when it attains that pitch, is a frantic flight of all the forces of the conscience, and such crises are fatal. Few among us emerge from them equal to ourselves, and firm in our duty, for when the limit of suffering is exceeded the the most imperturbable virtue is disconcerted. Jean Valjean took up the blotting-book and convinced himself afresh; he bent down as if petrified, and with fixed eye, over the undeniable lines, and such a cloud collected within him that it might be believed that the whole interior of his soul was in a state of collapse. He examined this revelation through the exaggerations of reverie with an apparent and startling calmness, for it is a formidable thing when a man’s calmness attains the coldness of a statue. He measured the frightful step which his destiny had taken without any suspicion on his part, he recalled his fears of the past summer, so madly dissipated, he recognized the precipice, it was still the same, but Jean Valjean was no longer at the top but at the bottom. It was an extraordinary and crushing fact that he had fallen without perceiving it, the whole light of his life had fled while he still fancied he could see the sun. His instinct did not hesitate; he brought together certain circumstances, certain dates, certain blushes, and certain palenesses of Cosette, and said to himself, “It is he!” The divination of despair is a species of mysterious bow which never misses its mark, and with its first shaft it hit Marius. He did not know the name, but at once found the man; he perceived distinctly at the bottom of the implacable evocation of

memory the unknown prowler of the Luxembourg, that villanous seeker of amorettes, that romantic idler, that imbecile, that coward, for it is cowardice to exchange loving glances with girls who have by their side a father who loves them. After feeling quite certain that this young man was at the bottom of the situation, and that all this came from him, Jean Valjean, the regenerated man, the man who had toiled so heavily in his soul, the man who had made so many efforts to resolve his whole life, his whole misery, and his whole misfortune, into love, looked into himself and saw there a spectre—hatred.

Great griefs contain exhaustion, and discourage us with life; the man into whom they enter feels something retire from him. In youth their visit is mournful, at a later date it is sinister. Alas, when the blood is hot, when the hair is black, when the head is upright on the body like the flame on the candle, when the heart, full of a yearning love, still has palpitations which may be given to it in return, when a man has time to recover from the wound, when all women are there, and all the smiles, and all the future, and the whole horizon, when the strength of life is complete—if despair be a frightful thing under such circumstances, what is it then in old age, when years are growing more and more livid, at that twilight hour when the stars of the tomb are beginning to become visible! While Jean Valjean was thinking, Toussaint came in; he rose and asked her,—

“Do you know where about it is?”

Toussaint, in her stupefaction, could only answer,—

“I beg your pardon, sir.”

Jean Valjean continued,—

“Did you not say just now that they were fighting?”

“Oh yes, sir,” Toussaint replied; “over at St. Merry.”

There are some mechanical movements which come to us, without our cognizance, from our deepest thoughts. It was doubtless under the impulse of a movement of this nature, of which he was scarce conscious, that Jean Valjean found himself five minutes later in the street. He was bareheaded, and sat down on the bench before his house, seemingly listening.

Night had set in.

HUGO. VOL. III.—6

## CHAPTER CCXXXI.

## WHILE COSETTE SLEEPS.

How long did he remain there ? what was the ebb and flow of this tragical meditation ? did he draw himself up ? did he remain bowed down ? had he been bent till he was broken ? could he recover himself and stand again upon something solid in his conscience ? Probably he could not have said himself. The street was deserted ; and a few anxious citizens who hurriedly return home scarce noticed him, for each for himself is the rule in times of peril. The lamplighter came as usual to light the lamp which was exactly opposite the door of No. 7 and went away. Jean Valjean would not have appeared to be a living man to any one who might have examined him in this gloom, and he sat on his bench motionless, like a statue of ice. His despair had got beyond congelation. The tocsin and vague stormy rumors could be heard, and in the midst of all these convulsions of the bell blended with the riot, the clock of St. Paul struck the eleventh hour, solemnly and without hurrying, for the tocsin is man, the hour is God. The passing of the hour produced no effect on Jean Valjean, and he did not stir. Almost immediately after, however, a sudden detonation broke out in the direction of the Halles, followed by a second even more violent,—it was probably that attack on the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie which we have just seen repulsed by Marius. At this double discharge, whose fury seemed increased by the stupor of the night, Jean Valjean started ; he turned in the direction whence the sound came, but then fell back on his bench, crossed his arms, and his head slowly bent down again on his chest. He resumed his dark dialogue with himself.

All at once he raised his eyes, for there was some one in the street ; he heard footsteps close to him, and by the light of the lamp he perceived a livid, young, and radiant face, in the direction of the street which runs past the Archives. It was Gavroche, who had just arrived from the Rue de la Chanvrerie ; Gavroche was looking up in the air, and appeared to be seeking. He saw Jean Valjean distinctly, but paid no attention to him. Gavroche, after looking up in the air, looked down on the ground ; he stood on tiptoe, and

felt the doors and ground-floor windows,—they were all shut, bolted, and barred. After examining the fronts of several houses barricaded in this way, the gamin shrugged his shoulders, and then resumed his self-colloquy with himself, thus, “ By Jove ! ” Then he looked up in the air again. Jean Valjean, who a moment previously in his present state of mind would neither have spoken to nor answered any one, felt an irresistible impulse to address this lad.

“ My little boy,” he said, “ what is the matter with you ? ”

“ Why, I’m hungry,” Gavroche answered bluntly. And he added, “ Little yourself.”

Jean Valjean felt in his pocket and pulled out a five-franc piece. But Gavroche, who was a species of wagtail, and rapidly passed from one gesture to another, had just picked up a stone. He had noticed the lamp.

“ Hilloh ! ” he said, “ you have still got lights here. You are not acting rightly, my friends, that is disorderly conduct. Break it for me.”

And he threw the stone at the lamp, whose glass fell with such a noise that the citizens concealed behind their curtains in the opposite house cried, “ There is ‘93 ! ” The lamp oscillated violently and went out ; the street suddenly became dark.

“ That’s it, old street,” said Gavroche. “ put on your night-cap.” Then turning to Jean Valjean, he said,—

“ What do you call that gigantic monument which you have there at the end of the street ? it’s the Archives, isn’t it ? let’s pull down some of those great brutes of columns and make a tidy barricade.”

Jean Valjean walked up to Gavroche.

“ Poor creature,” he said in a low voice, and as if speaking to himself, “ he is hungry.”

And he placed the five-franc piece in his hand. Gavroche raised his nose, amazed at the size of this double sou ; he looked at it in the darkness, and the whiteness of the double sou dazzled him. He was acquainted with five-franc pieces by hearsay, and their reputation was agreeable to him ; he was delighted to see one so closely, and said, “ Let us contemplate the tiger.” He looked at it for some moments in ecstasy : then, turning to Jean Valjean, he held out the coin to him, and said majestically,—

“ Citizen, I prefer breaking the lamps. Take back your ferocious animal, for I am

not to be corrupted. It has five claws, but can't scratch me."

"Have you a mother?" Jean Valjean asked.

Gavroche replied,—

"Perhaps more than you."

"Well," Jean Valjean continued, "keep that money for your mother."

Gavroche was affected. Moreover, he had noticed that the man who was addressing him had no hat on, and this inspired him with confidence.

"Really, then," he said, "it is not to prevent me breaking the lamps?"

"Break as many as you like."

"You are a worthy man," said Gavroche.

And he put the five-franc piece in one of his pockets. Then, with increasing confidence, he added,—

"Do you belong to this street?"

"Yes, why?"

"Can you point me out No. 7?"

"What do you want at No. 7?"

Here the lad stopped, for he feared lest he had said too much. He energetically plunged his nails into his hair, and confined himself to answering,—

"Ah, there it is."

An idea flashed across Jean Valjean's mind, for agony has lucidities of that nature. He said to the boy,—

"Have you brought me the letter which I am expecting?"

"You?" said Gavroche, "you ain't a woman."

"The letter is for Mademoiselle Cosette, is it not?"

"Cosette?" Gavroche grumbled; "yes, I think it is that absurd name."

"Well," Jean Valjean continued, "you have to deliver the letter to me, so give it here."

"In that case, you must be aware that I am sent from the barricade?"

"Of course," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche thrust his hand into another of his pockets, and produced a square folded letter; then he gave the military salute.

"Respect for the despatch," he said; "it comes from the provisional government."

"Give it to me," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche held the paper above his head.

"You must not imagine that it is a love letter, though it is for a woman; it is for the people; we are fighting, and we respect the sex; we are not like people in the world of

fashion, where there are lions that send poulets to camels."

"Give it to me."

"After all," Gavroche continued, "you look like an honest man."

"Make haste."

"Here it is."

And he handed the paper to Jean Valjean.

"And make haste, Monsieur Chose, since Mamselle Chosette is waiting."

Gavroche felt pleased at having made this pun. Jean Valjean added,—

"Must the answer be taken to St. Merry?"

"You would make in that way," Gavroche exclaimed, "one of those cakes vulgarly called *brioches*. The letter comes from the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrière, and I am going back to it. Good-night, citizen."

This said, Gavroche went away, or, to speak more correctly, resumed his bird-like flight to the spot whence he had escaped. He plunged again into the darkness, as if there were a hole there, with the rigid rapidity of a projectile: the lane of l'Homme Armé became once again silent and solitary. In a twinkling, this strange lad, who had shadow and dreams within him, buried himself in the gloom of these rows of black houses, and was lost in it like smoke in darkness, and it might have been fancied that he was dispersed, had vanished, had not, a few minutes after his disappearance, a noisy breakage of glass, and the splendid echo of a lamp falling on the pavement, suddenly re-awakened the indignant citizens. It was Gavroche passing along the Rue de Chaume.

Jean Valjean re-entered with Marius's letter: he groped his way up-stairs, pleased with the darkness like an owl that holds its prey, gently opened and closed the door, listened whether he could hear any sound, convinced himself that Cosette and Toussaint were, according to all appearances, asleep, and plunged into the fumade lighting bottle three or four matches before he could procure a spark, for his hand trembled so, as what he had just done was a robbery. At last his candle was lit, he sat down at the table, opened the letter, and read. In such violent emotions men do not read, they hurl down, so to speak, the paper they hold, clutch it like a victim, crumple it, bury in it the nails of their fury or delight, they run to the end, they dash at the beginning: the attention is feverish, it understands the essential facts, it seizes on

one point, and all the rest disappears. In the note from Marius to Cosette Jean Valjean only saw these words,—

“—I die: when you read this my soul will be near you.”

In the presence of this line he felt a horrible bedazzlement; he remained for a moment as if crushed by the change of emotion which took place in him. He gazed at Marius's letter with a species of drunken amazement, he had before his eyes this splendor, the death of the hated being. He uttered a frightful cry of internal joy. So all was over, and the dénouement arrived more quickly than he could have dared to hope. The being that encumbered his destiny was disappearing, he went away of his own accord, freely and willingly, without his doing any thing in the matter, without any fault on the part of him, Jean Valjean: “that man” was going to die, perhaps was already dead. Here his fever made its calculations,—“No, he is not yet dead. The letter was evidently written to be read by Cosette on the next morning; since the two volleys he had heard between 11 o'clock and midnight nothing had occurred: the barricade would not be seriously attacked till daybreak, but no matter, from the moment when “that man” is mixed up in this war, he is lost, he is caught in the cogwheels. Jean Valjean felt himself delivered; he was going to find himself once more alone with Cosette, the rivalry ceased and the future began again. He need only keep the note in his pocket, and Cosette would never know what had become of “that man;” I have only to let things take their course. That man cannot escape, and if he is not dead yet it is certain that he is going to die. What happiness!” All this said internally, he became gloomy; he went down and aroused the porter. About an hour later Jean Valjean left the house in the uniform of a National Guard and armed. The porter had easily obtained for him in the neighborhood the articles to complete his equipment: he had a loaded musket and a full cartouche-box. He proceeded in the direction of the Halles.

## CHAPTER CCXXXII.

### GAVROCHE'S EXCESS OF ZEAL.

IN the meanwhile an adventure had happened to Gavroche; after consciously stoning

the lamp in the Rue du Chaume, he approached the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and not seeing “a cat” there, found the opportunity excellent for striking up a song at the full pitch of his lungs. His march, far from being checked by the singing, became accelerated, and he sowed along the sleeping or terrified houses the following incendiary couplets :

L'oiseau médit dans les charmillles,  
Et prétend qu' hier Atala  
Avec un Russe s'en alla.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Mon ami Pierrot, tu babilles,  
Parce que l'autre jour Mila  
Cogna sa vitre, et m'appela.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Les drôlesses sont fort gentilles;  
Leur poisson qui m'ensorcela  
Griserait Monsieur Orfila,

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

J'aime l'amour et ses bisbilles,  
J'aime Agnes, j'aime Paméla,  
Lise en m'allumant se brûla.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Jadis, quand je vis les mantilles,  
De Suzette et de Zeila,  
Mon âme à leurs plis se mêla.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Amour, quand, dans l'ombre où tu brilles,  
Tu coiffes de roses, Lola,  
Je me damnerais pour cela.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Jeanne, à ton miroir tu t'habilles !  
Mon cœur un beau jour s'envola;  
Je crois que c'est Jeanne qui l'a.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Le soir, en sortant des quadrilles,  
Je montre aux étoiles, Stella,  
Et je leur dis, regardez-la.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Gavroche, while singing, was lavish of his pantomime, for gesture is the mainstay of a chorus. His face, an inexhaustible repertory of masks, made grimaces more convulsive and more fantastic than the mouths of a torn sheet in a stiff breeze. Unluckily, as he was alone and in the dark, this was

neither seen nor visible. Much wealth is lost in this way. Suddenly he stopped short.

"We must interrupt the romance," he said.

His cat-like eye had just distinguished inside a gateway what is called in painting an ensemble, that is to say, a being and a thing; the thing was a handcart, the being an Auvergnat sleeping inside it. The shafts of the cart were upon the pavement, and the Auvergnat's head leaned on the backboard of the truck. His body lay along this inclined plane, and his feet touched the ground. Gavroche, with his experience of the things of this world, recognized a drunkard; it was some street-corner porter who had drunk too much and was sleeping too much.

"Such is the use," Gavroche thought, "to which summer nights may be turned. The Auvergnat sleeps in his truck. I take the truck for the republic, and leave the Auvergnat for the monarchy."

His mind had just been illumined by this flash.

"This truck would be famous on our barricade!"

The Auvergnat was snoring. Gavroche gently pulled the truck behind and the Auvergnat in front, that is to say, by the feet, and in a second the porter was lying imperturbably flat on the pavement. The truck was liberated. Gavroche, accustomed constantly to face unexpected events, had always every thing about him. He felt in one of his pockets and pulled out a scrap of paper and a piece of red pencil, stolen from some carpenter. He wrote

*"Republique Française  
Received this truck."*

And he signed, GAVROCHE.

This done, he placed the paper in the snoring porter's velvet waistcoat pocket, seized the handcart, and started in the direction of the Halles, thrusting the truck before him at a gallop with a glorious triumphal row. This was dangerous, for there was a post at the royal printing office, and Gavroche did not think of that. This post was held by suburban National Guards; a certain amount of alarm was beginning to arouse the squad, and heads were raised in the guard beds. Two lamps broken so

shortly after each other, and this singing at the pitch of the lungs, were a good deal for these cowardly streets, which like to go to bed at sunset, and put the extinguisher on their candle at so early an hour. For an hour past the gamin had been making in this peaceful district the noise of a fly in a bottle. The suburban sergeant listened and waited, for he was a prudent man. The wild rolling of the truck filled up the measure of possible awaiting, and determined the sergeant to attempt a reconnaissance.

"There must be a whole band of them," he said, "so we will advance gently."

It was clear that the hydra of anarchy had emerged from its box and was playing the deuce in the quarter, so the sergeant ventured out of the guard-house on tip-toe. All at once, Gavroche, pushing his truck, found himself, just as he was turning out of the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, face to face with a uniform, a shako, a pompon, and a musket. For a second he stopped short.

"Hilloh," he said, "its he. Good-day, public order."

Gavroche's surprises were short and rapidly thawed,

"Where are you going, scamp?" the sergeant cried.

"Citizen," said Gavroche, "I have not yet called you bourgeois, so why do you insult me?"

"Where are you going, scoundrel?"

"Sir," Gavroche continued, "it is possible that you were a man of sense yesterday, but you must have sent in your resignation this morning."

"I ask you where you are going, villain?"

Gavroche answered, —

"You speak politely. Really, no one would fancy you that age. You ought to sell your hair at one hundred francs apiece, and that would bring you in five hundred francs."

"Where are you going? where are you going? where are you going, bandit?"

Gavroche retorted, —

"Those are ugly words. The first time they give you the breast they ought to wash your mouth out better."

The sergeant levelled his bayonet.

"Will you tell me where you are going or not, wretch?"

"My general," said Gavroche, "I am go-

ing to fetch the doctor for my wife, who is taken in labor."

"To arms!" the sergeant shouted.

It is the masterpiece of powerful minds to save themselves by what has ruined them; and Gavroche measured the whole situation at a glance. It was the truck that had compromised him, and so the truck must now protect him. At the moment when the sergeant was going to rush on Gavroche, the truck, converted into a projectile and launched at full speed, rolled upon him furiously, and the sergeant, struck in the stomach, fell back into the gutter, while his musket was discharged in the air. On hearing their sergeant's cry, the guard hurried forth pell-mell; the shot produced a general discharge blindly, after which the guns were reloaded, and they began again. This blind-man's-buff firing lasted a good quarter of an hour, and killed sundry panes of glass. In the meanwhile, Gavroche, who had turned back, stopped five or six streets off, and sat down panting on the bench at the corner of the Enfants rouges, and listened. After breathing for a few minutes, he turned in the direction where the musketry was raging, raised his left hand to the level of his nose, and thrust it out thrice, while striking the back of his head with his right hand,—a sovereign gesture, in while the Parisian gamins have condensed French irony, and which is evidently effective, as it has already lasted more than half a century. This gayety was troubled by a bitter reflection.

"Yes," he said, "I am delighted, I overflow with joy, I crack my sides, but I am losing my road, and shall be obliged to steer a roundabout course. I only hope I shall reach the barricade betimes."

After saying this he ran off again, and while running asked himself, "Where was I?" and he began his song again, which gradually died out in the darkness of the streets.

Mais il reste encore des bastilles,  
Et je vais mettre le holà  
Dans l'ordre public qué voilà.  
Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Quelqu'un veut-il jouer aux quilles?  
Tout le vieux monde s'écroula,  
Quand la grosse boule roula.  
Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Vieux bon peuple, a coups de béquilles,  
Cassons ce Louvre où s'étaït  
La monarchie en faibala.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

Nous en avons forcé les grilles,  
Le roi Charles Dix ce jour-là  
Tenait mal, et se décolla.

Où vont les belles filles,  
Lon la.

The turn-out of the guard produced some results, for a truck was captured and the drunkard made prisoner. The first was placed in the Green Yard, while the second was afterwards brought before a court-martial as an accomplice. The public minister of that day displayed in this circumstance his indefatigable zeal in the defence of society. Gavroche's adventure, which has remained as a tradition in the Temple quarter, is one of the most terrible reminiscences of the old bourgeois of the Marais, and is entitled in their memory,—“The night attack on the guard-house of the royal printing-office.”

## CHAPTER CCXXXIII.

### THE CHARYBDIS OF THE FAUBOURG OF ST. ANTOINE.

THE two most memorable barricades which the observer of social diseases can mention do not belong to the period in which the action of this book is laid. These two barricades, both symbols under different aspects of a formidable situation, emerged from the earth during the fatal insurrection of June, 1848, the greatest street-war which history has seen. It happens sometimes that the canaille, that great despairing crowd, contrary to principles, even contrary to liberty, equality, and fraternity, even contrary to the universal vote, the government of all by all, protests, in the depths of its agony, its discouragement, its denudation, its fevers, its distresses, its miasmas, its ignorance, and its darkness, and the populace offers battle to the people. The beggars attack the common right, the ochlocracy rises in insurrection against the demos. Those are mournful days; for there is always a certain amount of right even in this mania, there is suicide in this duel, and these words, intended to be insults, such as beggars, canaille, ochlocracy, the populace, prove, alas! rather the fault of

those who reign than the fault of those who suffer; rather the fault of the privileged than the fault of the disinherited. For our part, we never pronounce these words without grief and respect, for when philosophy probes the facts with which they correspond it often finds much grandeur by the side of misery. Athens was an ochlocracy; the beggars produced Holland; and populace more than once saved Rome; and the canaille followed the Saviour. There is no thinker who has not at times contemplated the magnificence below. St. Jerome doubtless thought of this canaille, of all these poor people, all these vagabonds, and all the wretches whence the apostles and martyrs issued, when he uttered the mysterious words,—*Fœx urbis, lux orbis*.

The exasperations of this mob, which suffers and which bleeds, its unwilling violence against the principles which are its life, its assaults upon the right, are popular coups d'état, and must be repressed. The just man devotes himself, and through love for this very mob, combats it. But how excusable he finds it while resisting it; how he venerates it, even while opposing it! It is one of those rare moments in which a man while doing his duty feels something that disconcerts him, and almost recommends him not to go further; he persists, and must do so, but the satisfied conscience is sad, and the accomplishment of the duty is complicated by a contraction of the heart. June, 1848, was, let us hasten to say, a separate fact, and almost impossible to classify in the philosophy of history. All the words we have uttered must be laid aside when we have to deal with this extraordinary riot, in which the holy anxiety of labor claiming its right was felt. It must be combated, and it was a duty to do so, for it attacked the republic; but, in reality, what was June, 1848? a revolt of the people against itself. When the subject is not left out of sight there is no digression, and hence we may be permitted to concentrate the reader's attention momentarily upon the two absolutely unique barricades to which we have alluded, and which characterized this insurrection. The one blocked up the entrance to the Faubourg St. Antoine, the other defended the approaches to the Faubourg du Temple; those before whom these two frightful masterpieces of civil war were raised in the dazzling June sun will never forget them.

The St. Antoine barricade was monstrous, it was three stories high and seven hundred feet in width. It barred from one corner to the other the vast mouth of the Faubourg, that is to say, three streets; ravined, slashed, serrated, surmounted by an immense jagged line, supported by piles which were themselves bastions, pushing out capes here and there, and powerfully reinforced by the two great promontories of the houses of the Faubourg, it rose like a Cyclopean wall at the back of the formidable square which had seen July 14. There were nineteen barricades erected in the streets behind the mother barricade, only on seeing it you felt in the Faubourg the immense agonizing suffering which had reached that extreme stage in which misery desires a catastrophe. Of what was this barricade made? of three six-storied houses demolished expressly some say, of the prodigy of all anger others say. It possessed the lamentable aspect of all the buildings of hatred, ruin. You might ask who built this? and you might also ask who destroyed this? It was the improvisation of the ebullition. Here with that door, that grating, that awning, that chimney, that broken stove, that cracked stew-pan. Give us any thing, throw every thing in! push, roll, pick, dismantle, overthrow, and pull down every thing! it was a collaboration of the pavement-stones, beams, iron-bars, planks, broken windows, unseated chairs, cabbage-stalks, rags, tatters, and curses. It was great and it was little, it was the abyss parodied on the square by the tohubohu. It was the mass side by side with the atom, a pulled-down wall and a broken pipkin, a menacing fraternization of all fragments, into which Sisyphus had cast his rock and Job his potsherd. Altogether it was terrible, it was the acropolis of the barefooted. Overturned carts studded the slope, an immense wain spread out across it, with its wheels to the sky, and looked like a scar on this tumultuous façade, an omnibus gayly hoisted by strength of arm to the very top of the pile, as if the architects of this savage edifice had wished to add mockery to the horror, offered its bare pole to the horses of the air. This gigantic mound, the alluvium of the riot, represented to the mind an Ossa upon Pelion of all revolutions, '83 upon '89, the 9th Thermidor upon the 10th August, the 18th Brumaire upon January 21st, Vendémiaire



upon *Prairial*, 1848 upon 1830. The square was worth the trouble, and this barricade was worthy of appearing upon the very spot whence the Bastile had disappeared. If the ocean made dykes it would build them in this way, and the fury of the tide was stamped on this shapeless encumbrance. What tide? the people. You fancied that you saw a petrified riot, and heard the enormous dark bees of violent progress humming about this barricade as if they had their hive there, Was it a thicket? was it a Bacchanalian feast? was it a fortress? *Vertigo* seemed to have built it with the flapping of its wings. There was a sewer in this redoubt, and something Olympian in this mass. You saw there in a pell-mell full of desperation, gables of roofs, pieces of garrets with their painted paper, window-frames with all their panes planted in the confusion and awaiting the cannon, pulled down mantelpieces, chests of drawers, tables, benches, a howling overthrow, and those thousand wretched things cast away even by a beggar which contain at once fury and nothingness. It may be said that it was the rage of a people, rage of wood, of iron, of bronze, of stone, that the Faubourg St. Antoine had swept them to their door with a gigantic broom, and made a barricade of their misery. Logs resembling executioners' blocks, anvil frames of the shape of galleys, broken chairs, horizontal wheels emerging from the heap, produced on this edifice of anarchy the representation of the old punishment suffered by the people. The St. Antoine barricade made a weapon of every thing. All that civil war can throw at the head of society came from it; it was not a fight but a paroxysm: the muskets which defended this redoubt, among which were several blunderbusses, discharged stones, bones, coat-buttons, and even the castors of night-commodes, very dangerous owing to the copper. This barricade was furious, it hurled an indescribable clamor into the clouds; at certain moments when challenging the army it was covered with a crowd and a tempest, it had a prickly crest of guns, sabres, sticks, axes, pikes, and bayonets, a mighty red flag fluttered upon it in the breeze, and the cries of command, the songs of attack, the rolling of the drum, the sobs of women, and the sardonic laughter of men dying of starvation, could be heard there. it was immeasurable and living, and a flash

of lightning issued from it as from the back of an electric animal. The spirit of revolution covered with its cloud this summit, where that voice of the people which resembles the voice of God, was growling, and a strange majesty was disengaged from this Titanic mass of stones. It was a dung-heap, and it was Sinai.

As we said above, it attacked in the name of the revolution, what? the revolution. It, this barricade, an accident, a disorder, a misunderstanding, an unknown thing, had facing it the constituent assembly, the sovereignty of the people, universal suffrage, the nation, the republic; and it was the *Carmagnole* defying the *Marseillaise*. It was a mad but heroic challenge, for this old faubourg is a hero. The faubourg and its redoubt supported each other; the redoubt formed the epaulement of the faubourg, and the redoubt leant upon the faubourg. The vast barricade was like a cliff against which the strategy of the African generals was broken. Its caverns, its excrescences, its warts, its humps, made grimaces, if we may employ the expression, and grinned behind the smoke. The grape-shot vanished in the shapeless heap; shells buried themselves in it and were swallowed up; cannon-balls only succeeded in forming holes, for of what use is it bombarding chaos? and the regiments, accustomed to the sternest visions of war, gazed with anxious eye at this species of wild beast redoubt, which was a boar, through its bristling and a mountain through its enormity.

A quarter of league further on, at the corner of the Rue Vieille du Temple, which debouches on the boulevard near the Chateau d'Eau, if you boldly advanced your head beyond the point formed by the projection of the magazine Dallemagne, you could see in the distance across the canal, and at the highest point of the ascent to Belleville, a strange wall rising to the second floor and forming a sort of connecting link between the houses on the right and those on the left, as if the street had folded back its highest wall in order to close itself up. This was built of paving-stones; it was tall, straight, correct, cold, perpendicular, and levelled with the plumb-line and the square; of course there was no cement, but, as in some Roman walls, this in no way disturbed its rigid architecture. From its height, its depth, could be guessed, for the entablature was mathe-

matically parallel to the basement. At regular distances almost invisible loopholes, resembling black threads, could be distinguished in the gray wall. This street was deserted throughout its length, and all the windows and doors were closed. In the background rose this bar, which converted the street into a blind alley; it was a motionless and tranquil wall, no one was seen, nothing was heard, not a cry, nor a sound, nor a breath. It was a sepulchre. The dazzling June sun inundated this terrible thing with light,—it was the barricade of the Faubourg du Temple. So soon as you reached the ground and perceived it, it was impossible even for the boldest not to become pensive in the presence of this mysterious apparition. It was adjusted, clamped, imbricated, rectilinear, symmetrical, and funereal, and there were there science and darkness. You felt that the chief of this barricade was a geometrician or a spectre, and as you gazed you spoke in a whisper. From time to time if any one, private, officer, or representative of the people, ventured to cross the solitary road, a shrill faint whistling was heard, and the passer-by fell wounded or dead, or, if he escaped, a bullet could be seen to bury itself in some shutter, or the stucco of the wall. Sometimes it was a grape-shot, for the man of the barricade had made out of gas-pipes, stopped up at one end with tow and clay, two small cannon. There was no useless expenditure of gunpowder, and nearly every shot told. There were a few corpses here and there, and patches of blood on the pavement. I remember a white butterfly that fluttered up and down the street; summer does not abdicate. All the gateways in the vicinity were crowded with corpses, and you felt in this street that you were covered by some one you could not see, and that the whole street was under the marksman's aim.

The soldiers of the attacking column, massed behind the species of ridge which the canal bridge forms at the entrance of the Faubourg du Temple, watched gravely and thoughtfully this mournful redoubt, this immobility, this impassiveness, from which death issued. Some crawled on their stomachs to the top of the pitch of the bridge, while careful not to let their shakos pass beyond it. Brave Colonel Monteynard admired this barricade with a tremor. "*How it is built*," he said to a representative, "*not a*

*single pavement-stone projects, beyond the other. It is made of china.*" At this moment a bullet smashed the cross on his chest and he fell. "The cowards!" the troops shouted, "Why do they not show themselves? they dare not! they hide!" The barricade of the Faubourg du Temple, defended by eighty men, and attacked by ten thousand, held out for three days, and on the fourth day the troops acted as they had done at Zaatcha and Constantine,—they broke through houses, passed along roofs, and the barricade was taken. Not one of the eighty cowards dreamed of flying; all were killed with the exception of Barthelemy, the chief, to whom we shall allude directly. The barricade of St. Antoine was the tumult of the thunder; the barricade of the Temple was the silence. There was between the two barricades the same difference as exists between the formidable and the sinister. The one seemed a throat, the other a mask. Admitting that the gigantic and dark insurrection of June was composed of a fury and an enigma, the dragon was seen in the first barricade and the sphynx behind the second.

These two fortresses were built by two men, Cournet and Barthelemy; Cournet made St. Antoine barricade, Barthelemy the Temple barricade, and each of them was the image of the man who built it. Cournet was a man of tall stature; he had wide shoulders, a red face, a smashing fist, a brave heart, a loyal soul, a sincere and terrible eye. He was intrepid, energetic, irascible, and stormy; the most cordial of men, and the most formidable of combatants. War, contest, medley were the air he breathed, and put him in good temper. He had been an officer in the navy, and from his gestures and his voice it could be divined that he issued from the ocean and came from the tempest; he continued the hurricane in battle. Omitting the genius, there was in Cournet something of Danton, as, omitting the divinity, there was in Danton something of Hercules. Barthelemy, thin, weak, pale, and taciturn, was a species of tragical gamin, who, having been struck by a policeman, watched for him, waited for him, and killed him, and at the age of seventeen was sent to the galleys. He came out and built this barricade. At a later date, when both were exiles in London, Barthelemy killed Cournet; it was a melancholy duel. Some time after that, Barthe-

lemy, caught in the cog-wheels of one of those mysterious adventures in which passion is mingled, catastrophes in which French justice only sees extenuating circumstances, and English justice only sees death, was hanged. The gloomy social edifice is so built that, owing to maternal denudation and moral darkness, this wretched being, who had had an intellect, certainly firm and possibly great, began with the galleys in France and ended with the gibbet in England. Barthelemy only hoisted one flag,—it was the black one.

## CHAPTER CCXXXIV.

### LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

SIXTEEN years count in the subterranean education of revolt, and June, 1848, knew a great deal more than June, 1832. Hence the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie was only a sketch and an embryo, when compared with the two colossal barricades which we have just described, but for the period it was formidable. The insurgents, under the eye of Enjolras, for Marius no longer looked at any thing, had turned the night to good account: the barricade had not only been repaired but increased. It had been raised two feet, and iron bars planted in the paving-stones resembled couched lances. All sorts of rubbish, added and brought from all sides, complicated the external confusion, and the redoubt had been carefully converted into a wall inside and a thicket outside. The staircase of paving-stones, which allowed the top of the barricade to be reached, was restored, the ground floor of the room of the inn was cleared out, the kitchen converted into an infirmary, the wounds were dressed, the powder, scattered about the tables and floor, was collected, bullets were cast, cartridges manufactured, lint plucked, the fallen arms distributed; the dead were carried off and laid in a heap, in the Mondétour lane, of which they were still masters. The pavement remained for a long time red at that spot. Among the dead were four suburban National Guards, and Enjolras ordered their uniforms to be laid on one side. Enjolras had advised two hours' sleep, and his advice was an order, still, only three or four took advantage of it, and Feuilly employed the

two hours in engraving this inscription on the wall, facing the wine-shop,—

"LONG LIVE THE PEOPLES."

These four words, carved in the stone with a nail, could still be read on this wall in 1848. The three women took advantage of the respite to disappear entirely, which allowed the insurgents to breathe more at their ease; and they contrived to find refuge in some neighboring house. Most of the wounded could and would still fight. There were, on a pile of mattresses and trusses of straw laid in the kitchen converted into an infirmary, five men seriously wounded, of whom two were Municipal Guards; the wounds of the latter were dressed first. No one remained in the ground floor room, save Mabeuf under his black cere-cloth, and Javert fastened to the post.

"This is the charnal-house," said Enjolras.

In the interior of this room, which was scarce lighted by a solitary candle, the mortuary table at the end being behind the post like a horizontal bar, a sort of large vague cross resulted from Javert standing and Mabeuf lying down. Although the pole of the omnibus was mutilated by the bullets, sufficient remained for a flag to be attached to it. Enjolras, who possessed that quality of a chief of always doing what he said, fastened to it the bullet-pierced and blood-stained coat of the killed old man. No meal was possible, for there was neither bread nor meat. The fifty men during the sixteen hours they had stood at the barricade speedily exhausted the scanty provisions of the inn. At a given moment every barricade that holds out becomes the raft of the *Meduse*, and the combatants must resign themselves to hunger. They had reached the early hours of that Spartan day, June 6, when at the barricade of St. Merry, Jeanne, surrounded by insurgents who cried for bread, answered, "What for? it is three o'clock, also at four we shall be dead." As they could no longer eat, Enjolras prohibited drinking; he put the wine under an interdict, and served out the spirits. Some fifteen full bottles, hermetically sealed, were found in the cellar, which Enjolras and Combeferre examined. Combeferre on coming up again said, "It belongs to Father Hucheloup's stock at the time when he was a grocer." "It must be real wine," Bossuet observed; "it is lucky that Grantaire is

asleep, for, if he were up, we should have a difficulty in saving those bottles." Enjolras, in spite of the murmurs, put his veto on the fifteen bottles, and in order that no one might touch them, and that they should be to some extent sacred, he had placed them under the table on which Father Mabeuf lay.

At about two in the morning they counted their strength; there were still thirty-seven. Day was beginning to appear, and the torch, which had been returned to its stone lantern, was extinguished. The interior of the barricade, that species of small yard taken from the street, was bathed in darkness, and resembled, through the vague twilight horror, the deck of a dismasted ship. The combatants moved about like black forms. Above this frightful nest of gloom the floors of the silent houses stood out lividly, and above them again the chimney-pots were assuming a roseate hue. The sky had that charming tint which may be white and may be blue, and the birds flew about in it with twitterings of joy. The tall house which formed the background of the barricade looked to the east, and had a pink reflection on its roof. At the third-floor window the morning breeze blew about the gray hair on the head of the dead man.

"I am delighted that the torch is put out," Courfeyrac said to Feuilly, "for that flame flickering in the breeze annoyed me, for it seemed to be frightened. The light of torches resembles the wisdom of cowards, it illumines badly because it trembles."

The dawn arouses minds like birds, and all were talking. Joly, seeing a cat stalking along a gutter, extracted this philosophy from the fact.

"What is the cat?" he exclaimed, "it is a correction. Le bon Dieu having made a mouse, said to himself, 'Hilloh, I have done a foolish trick,' and he made the cat, which is the erratum of the mouse. The mouse plus the cat is the revised and corrected proof of creation."

Combeferre, surrounded by students and workmen, was talking of the dead, of Jean Prouvaire, of Bahorel, of Mabeuf, and even of Cabuc, and the stern sorrow of Enjolras. He said,—

"Harmodius and Aristogiton, Brutus, Chereas, Stephanus, Cromwell, Charlotte Corday, and Sand, all had their moment of

agony after the blow was struck. Our head is so quivering, and human life such a mystery, that even in a civic murder, even in liberating murder, if there be such a thing, the remorse at having struck a man exceeds the joy of having benefited the human race.

And, such are the meanderings of exchanged words, a moment later, by a transition which came from Jean Prouvaire verses, Combeferre was comparing together the translators of the Georgics, Raux with Cournand, Cournand with Delille, and pointing out the few passages translated by Mafiltré, especially the prodigies on the death of Cæsar, and at that name the conversation reverted to Brutus.

"Cæsar," said Combeferre, "fell just! Cicero was severe to Cæsar, and was in the right, for such severity is not a Diatriba. When Zoilus insults Homer, when Mævius insults Virgil, when Visé insults Molière, when Pope insults Shakespeare, when Frère insults Voltaire, it is an old law of envy and hatred being carried out; for genius attracts insult, and great men are all barked at more or less. But Zoilus and Cicero are different. Cicero is a justiciary with thought in the sword. For my part, I blame that last justice, the glaive; antiquity allowed it. Cæsar, the violator of the Rubicon, conferring, as it coming from him, dignities that came from the people, and not rising on the entrance of the senate, behaved, as Eutropius said, like a king, and almost like a tyrant, *regis ac pæn tyrannici*? He was a great man, all the worse or all the better, the lesson is the more elevated. His three-and-twenty wounds affect me less than the spitting on the brow of Christ. Cæsar is stabbed by the senators; Christ is buffeted by soldiers. The God is seen in the greater amount of the outrage.

Bossuet, standing on a pile of stones, and commanding the speaker exclaimed, *gun in hand*,—

"Oh, Cydathenæum, oh! Myrrhinus, oh! Probalyntus, oh! Graces of Eanthus, oh! who will give me the power to utter, to pronounce the verses of Homer like a Greek or Laureum or Edapteen!"

Enjolras had gone out to reconnoitre, and had left by the Mondétour lane, keeping in the shadow of the houses. The insurgents we must state, were full of hope: the way in which they had repulsed the night attack

almost made them disdain beforehand the attack at daybreak. They waited for it and smiled at it, and no more doubted of their success than of their cause; moreover, help was evidently going to reach them, and they reckoned on it. With that facility of triumphant prophecy which is a part of the strength of the combating Frenchman, they divided into three certain phases the opening day,—at six in the morning a regiment, which had been worked upon, would turn; at mid-day insurrection all over Paris; at sunset the revolution. The tocsin of St. Merry, which had not ceased once since the previous evening, could be heard, and this was a proof that the other barricade, the great one, Jeanne's, still held out. All these hopes were interchanged by the groups with a species of gay and formidable buzzing, which resembled the war-hum of a swarm of bees. Enjolras reappeared returning from his gloomy walk in the external darkness. He listened for a moment to all this joy with his arms folded, and then said, fresh and rosy in the growing light of dawn,—

"The whole army of Paris is out, and one-third of that army is preparing to attack the barricade behind which you now are. There is, too, the National Guard. I distinguished the shakos of the fifth line regiment, and the guidons of the sixth legion. You will be attacked in an hour; as for the people, they were in a state of ferment yesterday, but this morning do not stir. There is nothing to wait for, nothing to hope; no more a faubourg than a regiment. You are abandoned."

These words fell on the buzzing groups, and produced the same effect as the first drops of a storm do on a swarm. All remained dumb, and there was a moment of inexpressible silence, in which death might have been heard flying past. This moment was short, and a voice shouted to Enjolras from the thickest of the crowd,—

"Be it so. Let us raise the barricade to a height of twenty feet, and all fall upon it. Citizens, let us offer the protest of corpses, and show that if the people abandon the republicans the republicans do not abandon the people."

These words disengaged the thoughts of all from the painful cloud of individual anxieties, and an enthusiastic shout greeted them. The name of the man who spoke thus was never known; he was some unknown blouse-wearer,

an unknown man, a forgotten man, a passing hero, that great anonymous always mixed up in human crises and social Geneses, who at the given moment utters the decisive word in a supreme fashion, and who fades away into darkness, after having represented for a minute, in the light of a flash, the people and God. This inexorable resolution was so strongly in the air of June 6, 1832, that almost at the same hour the insurgents of the St. Merry barricade uttered this cry, which became historical,—“Whether they come to our help, or whether they do not, what matter! Let us all fall here, to the last man.” As we see, the two barricades, though materially isolated, communicated.

## CHAPTER CCXXXV.

### FIVE LESS AND ONE MORE.

AFTER the man, whoever he might be, who decreed the “protest of corpses,” had spoken, and given the formula of the common soul, a strangely satisfied and terrible cry issued from every mouth, funereal in its meaning, and triumphal in its accent.

“Long live death! Let us all remain here.”

“Why all?” Enjolras asked.

“All, all!”

Enjolras continued,—

“The position is good and the barricade fine. Thirty men are sufficient, then why sacrifice forty?”

They replied,—

“Because not one of us will go away.”

“Citizens!” Enjolras cried, and there was in his voice an almost irritated vibration, “the republic is not rich enough in men to make an unnecessary outlay. If it be the duty of some to go away, that duty must be performed like any other.”

Enjolras, the man-principle, had that species of omnipotence which is evolved from the absolute over his co-religionists. Still, however great that omnipotence might be, they murmured. A chief to the tips of his fingers, Enjolras, on seeing that they murmured, insisted. He continued haughtily,—

“Let those who are afraid to be only thirty say so.”

The murmurs were redoubled.

“Besides,” a voice in the throng remarked,

"it is easy to say, Go away, but the barricade is surrounded."

"Not on the side of the Halles," said Enjolras "The Rue Mondétour is free, and the Marché des Innocents can be reached by the Rue des Prêcheurs,"

"And then," another voice in the group remarked, "we should be caught by falling in with some grand rounds of the line or the National Guard. They will see a man passing in blouse and cap; 'Where do you come from? don't you belong to the barricade?' and they will look at your hands, you smell of powder, and will be shot."

Enjolras, without answering, touched Combeferre's shoulder, and both entered the ground-floor room. They came out again a moment after, Enjolras holding in his outstretched hands the four uniforms which he had laid on one side, and Combeferre followed him carrying the cross-belts and shakos.

"In this uniform," Enjolras said, "it is easy to enter the ranks and escape. Here are four at any rate."

And he threw the four uniforms on the unpaved ground, but as no one moved in the stoical audience, Combeferre resolved to make an appeal.

"Come," he said, "you must show a little pity. Do you know what the question is here? it is about women. Look you, are there wives, yes or no? are there children, yes or no? are these nothing, who rock a cradle with their foot, and have a heap of children around them? let he among you who has never seen a nurse's breast hold up his hand. Ah, you wish to be killed. I wish it too, I who am addressing you, but I do not wish to feel the ghosts of women twining their arms around me. Die,—very good, but do not cause people to die. Suicides like the one which is about to take place here are sublime, but suicide is restricted and does not allow of extension, and so soon as it affects your relations, suicide is called murder. Think of the little fair heads, and think too of the white hair. Listen to me,—Enjolras tells me that just now he saw at the corner of the Rue du Cygne a candle at a poor window on the fifth floor, and on the panes the shaking shadow of an old woman who appeared to have spent the night in watching at the window; she is perhaps the mother of one of you. Well, let that man go, and hasten to say to his mother,—'Mother, here I am!' Let him

be easy in his mind, for the work will be done here all the same. When a man supports his relatives by his toil, he has no longer any right to sacrifice himself, for that is deserting his family. And then, too, those who have daughters, and those who have sisters only think of them. You let yourselves be killed, you are dead, very good; and to-morrow? it is terrible when girls have no bread for a man begs, but a woman sells. Oh, those charming, graceful, and gentle creatures with flowers in their caps, who fill the house with chastity, who sing, who prattle, who are like a living perfume, who prove the existence of angels in heaven by the purity of virgin on earth, that Jeane, that Lise, that Mimi—those adorable and honest creatures, who are your blessing and your pride,—ah, my God they will starve. What would you have me say to you? There is a human flesh-market and you will not prevent them entering it with your shadowy hands trembling around them. Think of the street, think of the pavement covered with strollers, think of the shops before which women in low-necked dresses come and go in the mud. Those women, too, were pure. Think of your sisters you who have any; misery, prostitution, the police. Saint Lazare, that is what these delicate maidens, these fragile marvels of chastity, modesty, and beauty, fresher than the lilies in May, will fall to; ah! you have let yourselves be killed! ah! you are no longer there! That is very good, you have wished to withdraw the people from royalty, and you give your daughters to the police. My friends take care and have compassion; we are no wont to think much about women, hapless women, we trust to the fact that women have not received the education of men. They are prevented reading, thinking, or occupying themselves with politics; but will you prevent them going to-night to the Morgue and recognizing your corpses? Come, those who have families must be good fellows, and shake our hand and go away, leaving us to do the job here all alone. I am well aware that courage is needed to go away, and that it is difficult, but the more difficult the more meritorious it is. You say, 'I have a gun and am at the barricade; all the worse, I remain. All the worse is easily said. My friends, there is a morrow, and that morrow you will not see, but your families will see it. An what sufferings! Stay, do you know what

becomes of a healthy child with cheeks like an apple, who chatters, prattles, laughs, and smiles as fresh as a kiss, when he is abandoned? I saw one, quite little, about so high, his father was dead and poor people had taken him in through charity, but they had not bread for themselves. The child was always hungry; it was winter-time, but though he was always hungry he did not cry. He was seen to go close to the stove, whose pipe was covered with yellow earth. The boy detached with his fingers a piece of this earth and ate it,—his breathing was hoarse, his face livid, his legs soft, and his stomach swollen. He said nothing, and when spoken to made no answer. He is dead, and was brought to die at the Necker hospice, where I saw him, for I was a student there. Now, if there be any fathers among you, fathers who take a delight in talking a walk on Sunday, holding in their powerful hand a child's small fingers, let each of these fathers fancy this lad his own. The poor brat I can remember perfectly; I fancy I see him now, and when he lay on the dissecting table, his bones stood out under his skin like the tombs under the grass of a cemetery. We found a sort of mud in his stomach, and he had ashes between his teeth. Come, let us examine our conscience and take the advice of our heart; statistics prove that the mortality among deserted children is fifty-five per cent. I repeat, it is a question of wives, of mothers, of daughters, and babes. Am I saying anything about you? I know very well what you are. I know that you are all brave. I know that you have all in your hearts the joy and the glory of laying down your lives for the great cause. I know very well that you feel yourselves chosen to die usefully and magnificently, and that each of you clings to his share of the triumph. Very good. But you are not alone in this world, and there are other beings of whom you must think; you should not be selfish."

All hung their heads with a gloomy air. strange contradictions of the human heart in the sublimest moments! Combeferre, who spoke thus, was not an orphan, he remembered the mothers of others and forgot his own, he was going to let himself be killed, and was "selfish." Marius, fasting and feverish, who had successfully given up all hope, cast ashore on grief, the most mournful of shipwrecks, saturated with violent emo-

tions, and feeling the end coming, had buried himself deeper and deeper in that visionary stupor which ever precedes the fatal and voluntarily accepted hour. A physiologist might have studied on him the growing symptoms of that febrile absorption which is known and classified by science, and which is to suffering what voluptuousness is to pleasure, for despair also has its ecstasy. Marius had attained that stage; as we have said, things which occurred before him appeared to him remote, he distinguished the ensemble, but did not perceive the details. He saw people coming and going before him in a flash, and he heard voices speaking as if from the bottom of an abyss. Still this affected him, for there was in this scene a point which pierced to him and aroused him. He had but one idea, to die, and he did not wish to avert his attention from it, but he thought in this gloomy somnambulism that in destroying himself he was not prohibited from saving somebody. He raised his voice,—

"Enjolras and Combeferre are right," he said, "let us have no useless sacrifice. I join them, and we must make haste. Combeferre has told you decisive things: there are men among you who have families, mothers, sisters, wives, and children. Such must leave the ranks."

Not a soul stirred.

"Married men and supporters of families will leave the ranks," Marius repeated.

His authority was great, for, though Enjolras was really the chief of the barricade, Marius was its savior.

"I order it," Enjolras cried.

"I implore it," Marius said.

Then these heroic men, stirred up by Combeferre's speech, shaken by Enjolras' order, and moved by Marius' entreaty, began denouncing one another. "It is true," a young man said to a grown-up man, "you are a father of a family; begone!" "No! you ought to do so rather," the man replied, "for you have two sisters to support;" and an extraordinary contest broke out, in which each struggled not to be thrust out of the tomb.

"Make haste," said Combeferre, "in a quarter of an hour there will no longer be time."

"Citizens," Enjolras added, "we have a republic here, and universal suffrage reigns. Point out yourselves the men who are to leave us."

They obeyed, and at the end of a few minutes five were unanimously pointed out and left the ranks.

"There are five of them!" Marius exclaimed.

There were only four uniforms.

"Well," the five replied, "one will have to remain behind."

And then came who should remain, and who should find reasons for others not to remain. The generous quarrel began again.

"You have a wife who loves you—you have your old mother—you have neither father nor mother; so what will become of your three little brothers?—you are the father of five children—you have a right to live for you are only seventeen, and it is too early to die."

These great revolutionary barricades were meeting-places of heroisms. The improbable was simple there, and these men did not astonish one another.

"Make haste," Courfeyrac repeated.

Cries to Marius came from the groups.

"You must point out the one who is to remain."

"Yes!" the five said, "do you choose, and we will obey you."

Marius did not believe himself capable of any emotion; still at this idea of choosing a man for death all the blood flowed back to his heart, and he would have turned pale could he have grown paler. He walked up to the five, who smiled upon him, and each with his eye full of that great flame which gleams through history on Thermopylæ, cried to him,—

"I! I! I!"

And Marius stupidly counted them. There was still five! then his eyes settled on the four uniforms. All at once a fifth uniform fell, as if from heaven, on the other four; the fifth man was saved. Marius raised his eyes, and recognized M. Fauchelevent. Jean Valjean had just entered the barricade; either through information he had obtained, through instinct, or through accident, he arrived by the Mondétour lane, and, thanks to his National Guard uniform, passed without difficulty. The vedette stationed by the insurgents in the Rue Mondétour had no cause to give the alarm signal for a single National Guard, and had let him enter the street, saying to himself, "He is probably a reinforcement, or at the worst a prisoner."

The moment was too serious for a sentry to turn away from his duty or his post of observation. At the moment when Jean Valjean entered the redoubt, no one noticed him, for all eyes were fixed on the five chosen men and the four uniforms. Jean Valjean, however, had seen and heard, and silently took off his coat and threw it on the pile formed by the other coats. The emotion was indescribable.

"Who is this man?" Bossuet asked.

"He is a man," Combeferre replied, "who saves his fellow-man."

Marius added in a grave voice,—

"I know him."

This bail was sufficient for all, and Enjolras turned to Jean Valjean.

"Citizen, you are welcome."

And he added,—

"You are aware that you will die."

Jean Valjean, without answering, helped the man he was saving to put on his uniform.

## CHAPTER CCXXXVI.

### THE PROSPECT FOR A BARRICADE.

THE situation of the whole party in this fatal hour, and at this inexorable spot, had as resultant and apex the supreme melancholy of Enjolras. Enjolras had within him the plenitude of the revolution; he was imperfect, however, so far as the absolute can be so, he had too much of St. Just and not enough of Anacharsis Clootz; still his mind, in the society of the friends of the A, B, C, had eventually received a certain magnetism of Combeferre's ideas. For some time past he had been gradually emerging from the narrow form of dogmatism and yielding to the expansion of progress, and in the end he had accepted, as the definitive and magnificent evolution, the transformation of the great French republic into the immense human republic. As for the immediate means, from a violent situation, he wished them to be violent, in that he did not vary, and he still belonged to that epic and formidable school which is resumed in the words "'93." Enjolras was standing on the paving-stone steps, with one of his elbows on the muzzle of his gun. He was thinking, he trembled, as men do when a blast passes, for spots where death lurks produce this tripod effect. A sort of stifled fire issued from



beneath his eyelashes, which were full of the internal glance. All at once he raised his head, his light hair fell back like that of the angel on the dark quadriga composed of stars, and he cried:—

“Citizens, do you represent the future to yourselves? the streets of towns inundated with light, green branches on the thresholds, nations sisters, men just, old men blessing children, the past loving the present, men thinking at perfect liberty, believers enjoying perfect equality, for religion, heaven, God, the direct priest, the human conscience converted into an altar, no more hatred, the fraternity of the workshop and the school, notoriety the sole punishment and reward, work for all, right for all, peace for all, no more bloodshed, no more wars, and happy mothers! To subdue the matter is the first step, to realize the ideal is the second. Reflect on what progress has already done; formerly the first human races saw with terror the hydra that breathed upon the waters, the dragon that vomited fire, the griffin which was the monster of the air, and which flew with the wings of an eagle and the claws of a tiger, pass before their eyes, frightful beasts which were below man. Man, however, set his snares, the sacred snares of intellect, and ended by catching the monsters in them. We have subdued the hydra, and it is called the steamer; we have tamed the dragon, and it is called the locomotive; we are on the point of taming the griffin, we hold it already, and it is called the balloon. The day on which that Promethean task is terminated and man has definitively attached to his will the triple antique chimera, the dragon, the hydra, and the griffin, he will be master of water, fire, and air, and he will be to the rest of animated creation what the ancient gods were formerly to him. Courage, and forward! Citizens, whither are we going? to science made the government, to the strength of things converted into the sole public strength, to the natural law having its sanction, and penalty in itself and promulgating itself by evidence, and to a sunrise of truth corresponding with the dawn of day. We are proceeding to a union of the peoples; we are proceeding to a unity of man. No more fictions, no more parasites. The real governed by the true is our object. Civilization will hold its assize on the summit of Europe and eventually in the centre of the continent, in

a great parliament of intellect. Something like this has been seen already; the Amphictyons held two sessions a year, one at Delphi, the place of the gods, the other at Thermopylæ, the place of souls. Europe will have her Amphictyons, the globe will have its Amphictyons, France bears the sublime future within her, and this is the gestation of the 19th century. What Greece sketched out is worthy of being finished by France. Listen to me. Feuille, valiant workman, man of the people, I venerate thee; yes, thou seest clearly future times, yes, thou art right. Thou hast neither father nor mother, Feuille, and thou hast adopted humanity as thy mother and right as thy father. Thou art about to die here, that is to say, to triumph. Citizens, whatever may happen to-day, we are about to make a revolution, by our defeat as well as by our victory! In the same way as fires light up a whole city, revolutions light up the whole human race. And what a revolution shall we make? I have just told you, the revolution of the True. From the political point of view, there is but one principle, the sovereignty of man over himself. This sovereignty of man over man is called liberty, and where two or three of these liberties are associated the state begins. But in this association, there is no abdication, and each sovereignty concedes a certain amount of itself to form the common right: This quality is the same for all, and this identity of concession which each makes to all, is called Equality. The common right is nought but the protection of all radiating over the right of each. This protection of all over each is termed Fraternity. The point of intersection of all aggregated societies is called Society, and this intersection being a junction, the point is a knot. Hence comes what is called the social tie; some say the social contract, which is the same thing, as the word contract is etymologically formed with the idea of a tie. Let us come to an understanding about equality, for if liberty be the summit, equality is the base. Equality, citizens, is not the whole of society on a level, a society of tall blades of grass and small oaks, or a number of entangled jealousies; it is, civilly, every aptitude having the same opening; politically, all votes having the same weight, and religiously, all consciences having the same right. Equality has an organ in gratuitous

and compulsory education, and it should begin with the right to the alphabet. The primary school imposed on all, the secondary school offered to all, such is the law, and from the identical school issues equal instruction. Yes, instruction ! light, light ! every thing comes from light and every thing returns to it. Citizens, the 19th century is great, but the 20th century will be happy. Then there will be nothing left resembling ancient history, there will be no cause to fear, as at the present day, a conquest, an invasion, usurpation, an armed rivalry of nations, an interruption of civilization depending on a marriage of kings, a birth in hereditary tyrannies, a division of peoples by congress, a dismemberment by the collapse of dynasties, a combat of two religions, clashing like two goats of the darkness, on the bridge of infantry; there will be no cause longer to fear famine, exhaustion, prostitution through destiny, misery through stoppage of work, and the scaffold, and the sword, and battles, and all the brigandage of accident in the forest of events; we might almost say there will be no more events, we shall be happy; the human race will accomplish its law as the terrestrial globe does its law; harmony will be restored between the soul and the planet, and the soul will gravitate round the truth as the planet does round light. Friends, the hour we are now standing in is a gloomy hour, but there are such terrible purchases of the future. Oh ! the human race will be delivered, relieved, and consoled ! We affirm it on this barricade, and where should the cry of love be raised if not on the summit of the sacrifice ? Oh, my brothers, this is the point of junction between those who think and those who suffer, this barricade is not made of paving-stones, beams, and iron bars, it is made of two aggregations, one of ideas and one of sufferings. Misery meets then the ideal; day embraces the night there, and says to it, I am about to die with thee, and thou wilt be born again with me. Faith springs from the embrace of all the desolations; sufferings bring hither their agony and ideas their immortality. This agony and this immortality are about to be mingled and compose one death. Brothers, the man who dies here dies in the radiance of the future, and we shall enter a tomb all filled with dawn."

Enjolras interrupted himself, rather than was silent; his lips moved silently as if he

were talking to himself, which attracted attention, and in order still to try to hear him they held their tongues. There was no applause, but they whispered together for a long time. Language being breath, the rustling of intellects resembles the rustling of leaves.

Let us describe what was going on in Marius' thoughts: our readers will remember his state of mind, for, as we just now said, everything was only a vision to him. His appreciation was troubled, for he was (we urge the fact) beneath the shadow of the great gloomy wings opened above the dying. He felt that he had entered the tomb, he fancied that he was already on the other side of the wall, and he only saw the faces of the living with the eyes of a dead man. How was M. Fauchelevent present? why was he here, and what did he come to do? Marius did not ask himself all these questions. Moreover, as our despair has the peculiar thing about it that it envelops others as it does ourselves, it appeared to him logical that everybody should die. Still he thought of Cosette with a contraction of the heart. However, M. Fauchelevent did not speak to him, did not look at him, and did not even seem to hear Marius when he raised his voice, saying, "I know him." As for Marius, this attitude of M. Fauchelevent relieved him, and if such a word were permissible for such impressions, we might say that it pleased him. He had ever felt an absolute impossibility in addressing this enigmatical man, who was at once equivocal and imposing to him. It was a very long time too since he had seen him; and this augmented the impossibility for a timid and reserved nature like Marius'.

The five men selected left the barricade by the Mondétour lane, perfectly resembling National Guards. One of them wept as he went away, and before doing so they embraced those who remained. When the five men sent back to life had left Enjolras thought of the one condemned to death. He went to the ground-floor room, where Javert, tied to the post, was reflecting.

"Do you want anything?" Enjolras asked him.

Javert answered,—

"When will you kill me?"

"Wait. We require all our cartridges at this moment."

"In that case, give me some drink," Javert said.

Enjolras himself held out to him a glass of water, and, as Javert was bound, helped him to drink.

"Is that all?" Enjolras answered.

"I feel uncomfortable at this post," Javert replied; "yon did not act kindly in leaving me fastened to it the whole night. Bind me as you please, but you might surely lay me on a table, like the other man."

And with a nod of the head he pointed to M. Mabœuf's corpse. It will be remembered that there was at the end of the room a long wide table on which bullets had been run and cartridges made. All the cartridges being made, and all the powder expended, this table was free. By Enjolras's order four insurgents unfastened Javert from the post, and while they did so a fifth held a bayonet to his chest. His hand remained fastened behind his back, a thin strong cord was attached to his feet, which enabled him to walk fifteen inches, like those who are going to ascend the scaffold, and he was forced to walk to the table at the end of the room, on which they laid him, securely fastened round the waist. For greater security, a system of knotting was employed by means of a cord fastened to the neck, which rendered any escape impossible; it was the sort of fastening called in a prison a martingale, which starts from the nap of the neck, is crossed on the stomach, and is turned round the hands after passing between the legs. While Javert was being bound a man standing in the doorway regarded him with singular attention, and the shadow this man cast caused Javert to turn his head. He raised his eyes and recognized Jean Valjean, but he did not even start, he merely looked down haughtily, and restricted himself to saying, "It is quite simple."

## CHAPTER CCXXXVII.

### THE ARTILLERY SETS TO WORK.

DAY grew rapidly, but not a window opened, not a door was ajar; it was the dawn, not an awaking. The end of the Rue de la Chanvrerie opposed to the barricade had been evacuated by the troops, as we stated; it appeared to be free and open for passers-by with sinister tranquillity. The Rue St. Denis

was dumb as the Avenue of the Sphinxes at Thebes; there was not a living being on the square, which a sunbeam whitened. Nothing is so melancholy as this brightness of deserted streets, nothing could be seen, but something could be heard, and there was a mysterious movement at a certain distance off. It was evident that the critical moment was arriving, and, as on the previous evening, the vedettes fell back, but this time all of them did so. The barricade was stronger than at the prior attack, for since the departure of the five it had been heightened. By the advice of the vedette who had been watching the region of the Halles, Enjolras, through fear of a surprise in the rear, formed a serious resolution. He barricaded the small passages of the Mondétour lane, which had hitherto remained free, and for this purpose a further portion of the street was unpaved. In this way the barricade, walled in on three sides—in front by the Rue de la Chanvrerie, on the left by the Rue du Cygne, and on the right by the Rue Mondétour—was truly almost impregnable, but it is true that they were fatally enclosed within it. It had three fronts but no issue, it was a fortress but a mouse-trap, as Courfeyrac said with a smile. Enjolras had some thirty paving-stones piled up by the door of the inn, which, as Bossuet said, have been "removed over and above." The silence was now so profound in the direction whence the attack must come, that Enjolras ordered all his men to return to their fighting posts, and a ration of brandy was distributed to each man.

Nothing is more curious than a barricade preparing for an assault; every man chooses his place, as at the theatre. They crowd, elbow and shoulder one another, and some make stalls of paving-stones. Here an angle of the wall is in the way, and it is removed; there is a redan which may offer protection, and they seek shelter in it. Left-handed men are precious, for they take places inconvenient for others. Many arrange so as to fight seated, for they wish to be at their ease to kill, and comfortable in dying. In the fatal war of June, 1848, an insurgent, who was a wonderful marksman, and who fought from a terraced roof, had a Voltaire easy chair carried there, and was knocked over in it by a volley of grape-shot. So soon as the chief has given the signal for action all disorderly movements cease; there is no longer

any sharp-shooting, any conversations or asides: all that minds contain converges, and is changed into the expectation of the assailant. A barricade before danger is a chaos, in danger discipline, for peril produces order. So soon as Enjolras had taken his double-barrelled gun, and placed himself at a species of parapet which he reserved for himself, all were silent; a quick, sharp crackling ran confusedly along the wall of paving-stones; it was the muskets being cocked. However, the attitudes were haughtier and more confident than ever, for an excess of sacrifice is a strengthening, and though they no longer had hope, they had despair—despair, that last weapon, which at times gives victory, as Virgil tells us. Supreme resources issue from extreme resolutions. To embark on death is at times the means of escaping the shipwreck, and the cover of the coffin becomes a plank of salvation. As on the previous evening, all their attention was turned upon the end of the street, which was now lighted up and visible. They had not long to wait ere the movement began again, distinctly in the direction of St. Leu, but it did not resemble the sound of the first attack. A rattling of chains, the alarming rolling of a heavy weight, a clang of bronze leaping on the pavement, and a species of solemn noise, announced that a sinister engine was approaching; there was a tremor in the entrails of these old peaceful streets, pierced and built for the fruitful circulation of interests and ideas, and which are not made for the monstrous rolling of the wheels of war. The fixity of the eyes turned toward the end of the street became stern, as a cannon appeared. The gunners pushed the gun on; the limber was detached, and two men supported the carriage, while four were at the wheels, others followed with the tumbril, and the lighted match could be seen smoking.

"Fire!" shouted Enjolras.

The whole barricade burst into a flame, and the detonation was frightful; an avalanche of smoke covered and concealed the gun and the men. A few seconds after the cloud was dispersed, and the gun and the men reappeared; the gunners were bringing it up to the front of the barricade, slowly, correctly, and without hurry, not one had been wounded. Then the captain of the gun, hanging with his whole weight on the breech to elevate the muzzle, began pointing the gun,

with the gravity of an astronomer setting a telescope.

"Bravo for the artillery!" cried Bossuet.

And all the men at the barricade clapped their hands. A moment after the gun, standing in the very centre of the street across the gutter was in position, and a formidable mouth yawned at the barricade.

"Come, we are going to be gay," said Courfeyrac, "here is the brutality; after the fillip the blow with the fist. The army is extending its heavy paw toward us, and the barricade is going to be seriously shaken. The musketry fire feels, and the cannon takes."

"It is an eight-pounder of the new pattern in bronze, Combeferre added. "Those guns, if the proportion of ten parts of tin to one hundred of copper is exceeded, are liable to burst, for the excess of tin renders them too soft. It thus happens that they have holes and cavities in the vent, and in order to obviate this danger and be able to load, it would perhaps be advisable to revert to the process of the fourteenth century, circling and reinforcing the gun with a series of steel rings, without any welding from the breech to the trunnions. In the meanwhile they remedy the defect as well as they can, and they manage to discover where the holes are in the vent of the gun by means of a searcher; but there is a better method in Gribesauval's movable star."

"In the sixteenth century," Bossuet observed, "guns were rifled."

"Yes, Combeferre replied, "that augments the balistic force, but lessens the correctness of aim. At short distances the trajectory has not all the desirable rigidity, the parabola is exaggerated, the path of the projectile is not sufficiently rectilinear for it to hit intermediate objects, though that is a condition of fighting whose importance grows with the proximity of the enemy and the precipitation of the firing. This defective tension of the curve of the projectile in rifled cannon of the sixteenth century emanated from the weakness of the charge; weak charges for such engines are imposed by the ballistic necessities, such, for instance, as the preservation of the carriage. After all, the cannon, that despot, cannot do all that it wishes, and strength is a great weakness. A cannon-ball only goes six hundred leagues an hour, while light covers seventy thousand leagues per second.

Such is the superiority of our Saviour over Napoleon.

"Reload your guns," said Enjolras.

In what manner would the revetment of the barricade behave against a cannon-ball? Would a breech be formed? that was the question. While the insurgents were reloading their guns the artillerymen loaded the cannon. The anxiety within the redoubt was profound; the shot was fired, and the detonation burst forth.

"Present!" a joyous voice cried.

And at the same time as the cannon-ball struck the barricade, Gavroche bounded inside it. He came from the direction of the Rue du Cygne, and actively clambered over the accessory barricade which fronted the labyrinth of the little Truanderie. Gavroche produced greater effect at the barricade than the cannon-ball did; for the latter was lost in the heap of rubbish. It had broken a wheel of the omnibus, and finished the old truck, on seeing which the insurgents burst into a laugh.

"Pray go on," Bossuet cried to the gunners.

Gavroche was surrounded, but he had no time to report anything as Marius, shuddering, drew him on one side.

"What have you come to do here?"

"What a question?" the boy said, "and you, pray?"

And he gazed fixedly at Marius with his epic effrontery; his eyes were dilated by the prond brightness which they contained. It was with a stern accent that Marius continued,—

"Who told you to return? I only trust that you delivered my letter at its address."

Gavroche felt some degree of remorse in the matter of the letter; for, in his hurry to return to the barricade, he had got rid of it rather than delivered it. He was forced to confess to himself that he had confided somewhat too lightly in this stranger, whose face he had not even been able to distinguish. It is true that this man was bareheaded, but that was not enough. In short, he reproached himself quietly for his conduct, and feared Marius' reproaches. He took the simplest process to get out of the scrape,—he told an abominable falsehood.

"Citizen, I delivered the letter to the porter. The lady was asleep, and she will have the letter when she wakes."

Marius had two objects in sending the letter,—to bid Cosette farewell and save Gavroche. He was obliged to satisfy himself with one half of what he wanted. The connection between the sending of the letter and M. Fauchelevent's presence at the barricade occurred to his mind, and he pointed him out to Gavroche.

"Do you know that man?"

"No," said Gavroche.

Gavroche, in truth, as we know, had only seen Jean Valjean by sight. The troubled and sickly conjectures formed in Marius mind were dissipated; did he know M. Fauchelevent's opinions? perhaps he was a republican. Hence his presence in the action would be perfectly simple. In the meanwhile, Gavroche had run to the other end of the barricade, crying, "My gun!" and Courfeyrac ordered it to be given to him. Gavroche warned "his comrades," as he called them, that the barricade was invested; and he had found great difficulty in reaching it. A battalion of the line, with their arms piled in the little Truanderie, was observing on the side of the Rue du Petit Cygne, on the opposite side the Municipal Guard occupied the Rue des Prêcheurs, while in front of them they had the main body of the army. This information given, Gavroche added,—

"I authorize you to give them a famous pill."

Enjolras was in the meanwhile watching at his loop-hole with open ears; for the assailants, doubtless little satisfied with the gunshot, had not repeated it. A company of line infantry had come up to occupy the extremity of the street behind the gun. The soldiers unpaved the street, and erected with the stones a small low wall, a species of epaulement, only eighteen inches high, and facing the barricade. At the left-hand angle of this work could be seen the head of a suburban column, massed in the Rue St. Dennis. Enjolras, from his post, fancied he could hear the peculiar sound produced by canister when taken out of its box, and he saw the captain of the gun change his aim and turn the gun's muzzle slightly to the left. Then the gunners began loading, and the captain of the gun himself took the port-fire and walked up to the vent.

"Fall on your knees all along the barricade," Enjolras shouted.

The insurgents, scattered in front of the

wine-shop, and who had left their posts on Gavroche's arrival, rushed pell-mell toward the barricade; but ere Enjolras' order was executed, the discharge took place with the frightful rattle of a round of grape-shot; it was one, in fact. The shot was aimed at the opening in the redoubt, and ricocheted against the wall, killing two men and wounding three. If this continued the barricade would be no longer tenable, for the grape-shot entered it. There was a murmur of consternation.

"Let us stop a second round," Enjolras said; and levelling his gun he aimed at the firer, who was leaning over the breach and rectifying the aim. The firer was a handsome young sergeant of artillery, fair, gentle-faced, and having the intelligent look peculiar to that predestined and formidable arm which, owing to its constant improvement, must end by killing war. Combeferre, who was standing by Enjolras' side, gazed at this young man.

"What a pity," said Combeferre, "what a hideous thing such butchery is! Well, when there are no kings left there will be no war. Enjolras, you aim at that sergeant, but do not notice him. Just reflect that he is a handsome young man; he is intrepid. You can see that he is a thinker, and these artillerymen are well educated; he has a father, mother and family; he is probably in love, he is but twenty-five years at the most, and might be your brother."

"He is so," said Enjolras.

"Yes," Combeferre added, "and mine too. Do not kill him."

"Let me at peace. It must be."

And a tear slowly coursed down Enjolras' marble cheek. At the same time he pulled the trigger and the fire flashed forth. The artilleryman turned twice on his heel, with his arms stretched out before him, and his head raised as if to breathe air, and then fell across the cannon motionless. His back could be seen, from the middle of which a jet of blood gushed forth; the bullet had gone right through his chest, and he was dead. It was necessary to bear him away and fill up his place, and thus a few minutes were gained. Opinions varied in the barricade, for the firing of the piece was going to begin again, and the barricade could not hold out for a quarter of an hour under the grape-shot; it was absolutely necessary to deaden the rounds. Enjolras gave the command.

"We must have a mattress, then."

"We have none," said Combeferre, "the wounded are lying on them."

Jean Valjean, seated apart on a bench, near the corner of the wine-shop, with his gun between his legs, had not up to the present taken any part in what was going on. He did not seem to hear the combatants saying around him, "There is a gun that does nothing." On hearing the order given by Enjolras, he rose. It will be remembered that on the arrival of the insurgents in the Rue de la Chanvrière, an old woman, in her terror of the bullets, placed her mattress in front of her window. This window, a garret window, was on the roof of a six-story house, a little beyond the barricade. The mattress, placed across it, leaning at the bottom upon two clothes-props, was held above by two ropes which at a distance seemed two pieces of pack-thread, and were fastened to nails driven into the mantelpiece. These cords could be distinctly seen on the sky, like hairs.

"Can any one lend me a double barrelled gun?" Jean Valjean asked.

Enjolras who had just reloaded his, handed it to him. Jean Valjean aimed at the garret window and fired; one of the two cords of the mattress was cut asunder, and it only hung by one thread. Jean Valjean fired the second shot, and the second cord lashed the garret-window; the mattress glided between the two poles, and fell into the street. The insurgents applauded, and every voice cried,—

"There is a mattress."

"Yes," said Combeferre, "but who will go and fetch it?"

The mattress in truth, had fallen outside the barricade, between the besiegers and besieged. Now, as the death of the sergeant of artillery had exasperated the troops, for some time past they had been lying flat behind the pile of paving-stones which they had raised; and in order to make up for the enforced silence of the gun, they had opened fire on the barricade. The insurgents, wishing to save their ammunition, did not return this musketry; the fusilade broke against the barricade but the street which it filled with bullets was terrible. Jean Valjean stepped out of the gap, entered the street, traversed the hail of bullets, went to the mattress, picked it up, placed it on his back, and re-entering the barricade, himself placed the mattress in the gap, and fixed it against the wall, so that the gunners should

not see it, This done, they waited for the next round, which was soon fired. The gun belched forth its canister with a hoarse roar, but there was no ricochet, and the grape-shot was checked by the mattress. The expected result was obtained, and the barricade saved,

"Citizen," Enjolras said to Jean Valjean, "the republic thanks you."

Bossuet admired, and laughingly said,—

"It is immoral for a mattress to have so much power: it is the triumph of what yields over that which thunders. But no matter, glory to the mattress that annuls a cannon!"

## CHAPTER CCXXXVIII.

### DAWN.

At this moment Cosette awoke; her bedroom was narrow, clean, discreet, with a long window on the east side, looking out into the courtyard of the house. Cosette knew nothing of what was going on in Paris, for she had returned to her bedroom at the time when Toussaint said, "There is a row." Cosette had slept but a few hours, though well. She had had sweet dreams, which resulted perhaps from the fact that her small bed was very white. Somebody, who was Marius, appeared to her in light; and she arose with the sun in her eyes, which at first produced the effect of a continuation of her dream upon her. Her first thought on coming out of the dream was of a smiling nature, and she felt quite reassured. Like Jean Valjean, a few hours before she was passing through that reaction of the soul which absolutely desires no misfortune. She began hoping with all her strength, without knowing why, and then suffered from a contraction of the heart. She had not seen Marius for three days, but she said to herself that he must have received her letter, that he knew where she was, and that he was so clever, and would find means to get to her,—and most certainly to-day, and perhaps that very morning. It was bright day, but the sunbeam was nearly horizontal, and so she thought that it must be early, but that she ought to rise in order to receive Marius. She felt that she could not live without Marius, and that consequently was sufficient, and Marius would come. No objection was admissible, all this was certain. It was monstrous enough to have suffered for three days: Marius absent for three days, that was hor-

rible on the part of *le bon Dieu*. Now this cruel suspense sent from on high, was a trial passed through; Marius was about to come and bring good news. Thus is youth constituted: it wipes away its tears quickly, and finding sorrow useless, does not accept it. Youth is the smile of the future of an unknown thing, which is itself: it is natural for it to be happy, and it seems as if its breath were made of hope.

However, Cosette could not succeed in recalling to mind what Marius had said to her on the subject of this absence, which was only to last one day, and what explanation he had given her about it. Every one will have noticed with what skill a coin let fall on the ground runs to hide itself, and what art it has in rendering itself invisible. There are thoughts which play us the same trick; they conceal themselves in a corner of our brain; it is all over, they are lost, and it is impossible to recall them to memory. Cosette felt somewhat vexed at the little useless effort her memory made, and said to herself that it was very wrong and culpable of her to forget words pronounced by Marius. She left her bed, and performed the two ablutions of the soul and the body, her prayers and her toilette.

We may, if absolutely required, introduce a reader into a nuptial chamber but not into a virgin's room. Verse could scarce venture it, but prose durst not do so. It is the interior of a still closed flower, a whiteness in the gloaming, the inner cell of a closed lily, which must not be gazed at by man till it has been gazed at by the sun. Woman in the bud is sacred; this innocent bud, which discovers itself, this adorable semi-nudity which is afraid of itself, this white foot which takes refuge in a slipper, this throat which veils itself before a mirror, as if the mirror were an eye, this chemise which hurriedly rises and covers the shoulder at the sound of a piece of furniture creaking, or a passing vehicle, these knotted strings, this stay-lace, this tremor, this shudder of cold and shame, this exquisite shyness in every movement, this almost winged anxiety when there is nothing to fear, the successive phases of the apparel, which are as charming as the clouds of dawn—it is not befitting that all this should be described, and it is too much to have merely indicated it. The eye of man must be even more religious before the

rising of a maiden than before the rising of a star. The possibility of attaining ought to be turned into augmented respect. The down of the peach, the russet of the plum, crystal radiated with snow, the butterfly's wing powdered with feathers, are but coarse things by the side of this chastity, which does not know itself that it is chaste. The maiden is only the flash of the dream, and is not yet a statue; her alcove is concealed in the sombre part of the ideal, and the indiscreet touch of the eye brutalizes this vague transparent shadow. In this case contemplation is profanation. We will therefore say nothing about the sweet awaking and rising of Cosette. An eastern fable tells us that the rose was made white by God, but that Adam having looked at it for a moment when it opened, it felt ashamed, and turned pink. We are of those who feel themselves abashed in the presence of maidens and flowers, for we find them venerable.

Cosette dressed herself very rapidly, and combed and dressed her hair, which was very simple at that day, when women did not swell their ringlets and plaits with cushions and pads, and placed no crinoline in their hair. Then she opened the window and looked all around, hoping to discover somewhere in the street, at the corner of a house, a place whence she could watch for Marius. But nothing could be seen of the outside; the court-yard was surrounded by rather lofty walls, and was bounded by other gardens. Cosette declared these gardens hideous, and for the first time in her life considered flowers ugly. The paltriest street gutter would have suited her purpose better; and she resolved to look up to heaven, as if she thought that Marius might possibly come thence. Suddenly she burst into tears, not through any fickleness of temperament, but her situation consisted of hopes dashed with despondency. She confusedly felt something horrible, and in truth things pass in the air. She said to herself that she was sure of nothing, that letting herself out of sight was losing herself, and the idea that Marius might return to her from heaven appeared to her no longer charming but lugubrious. Then—for such these clouds are—calmness returned and hope had a species of unconscious smile, which trusted in God, however.

Everybody was still asleep in the house, and a provincial silence prevailed. No shut-

ter was opened, and the porter's lodge was still closed. Toussaint was not up, and Cosette naturally thought that her father was asleep. She must have suffered greatly, and must still be suffering, for she said to herself that her father had been unkind, but she reckoned on Marius. The eclipse of such light was decidedly impossible. At moment she heard some distance off a sort of heavy shock, and thought how singular it was that gates were opened and shut at so early a hour; it was the sound of the cannon-balls battering the barricade. There was a man's nest a few feet below Cosette's window in the old smoke-blackened cornice, and the mouth of the nest projected a little beyond the cornice, so that the interior of this little Paradise could be seen from above. The mother was there expanding her wings like fan over her brood; the male bird fluttered round, went away, and then returned, bringing in his bill food and kisses. The rising day glided this happy thing, the great law increase and multiply, was there smiling an August, and the sweet mystery was unfolded in the glory of the morn. Cosette, with her hair in the sunshine, her soul in flame enlightened by love within and the dawn without, bent forward as if mechanically, and, almost without daring to confess to herself that she was thinking at the same time of Marius, she began looking at these birds, this family, this male and female, this mother and her little ones, with a the profound trouble which the sight of a nest occasions a virgin.

## CHAPTER CCXXXIX.

### PASSING FLASHES.

THE fire of the assailants continued, and the musketry and grape-shot alternated though without doing much mischief. The upper part of Corinth alone suffered, and the first-floor and garret-windows, pierced by slugs and bullets, gradually lost their shape. The combatants posted there were compelled to withdraw, but, in fact, such are the tactics of an attack on a barricade, to skirmish for a long time and exhaust the ammunition of the insurgents, if they commit the error of returning the fire. When it is discovered by the slackening of their fire that they have no powder or ball left, the assault is made



Enjolras had not fallen into this trap, and the barricade did not reply. At each platoon fire, Gavroche thrust his tongue into his cheek, a sign of supreme disdain.

"That's good," he said, "tear up the linen, for we require lint."

Courfeyrac addressed the grape-shot on its want of effect, and said to the cannon,—

"You are becoming diffuse, my good fellow."

In battle intrigues take place as at a ball; and it is probable that the silence of the redoubt was beginning to render the assailants anxious, and make them fear lest some unexpected incident had occurred. They felt a need of seeing clearly through this pile of paving-stones, and what was going on behind this impassive wall, which received shots without answering them. The insurgents suddenly perceived a helmet glistening in the sun upon an adjoining roof; a sapper was leaning against a tall chimney-pot and apparently a sentry there. He looked down into the barricade.

"That's a troublesome spy," said Enjolras.

Jean had returned Enjolras his fowling-piece, but still had his own musket. Without saying a word he aimed at the sapper, and a second later the helmet, struck by a bullet, fell noisily into the street. The soldier disappeared with all possible haste. A second watchman took his place, and it was an officer. Jean Valjean, who had reloaded his musket, aimed at the new-comer, and sent the officer's helmet to join the private's. The officer was not obstinate, but withdrew very quickly. This time the hint was understood, and no one again appeared on the roof.

"Why did you not kill the man?" Bossuet asked Jean Valjean, who, however, made no reply.

Bossuet muttered in Combeferre's ear,—

"He has not answered my question."

"He is a man who does kind actions with musket-shots," said Combeferre.

Those who have any recollection of this now distant epoch know that the suburban National Guards were valiant against the insurrection, and they were peculiarly brave and obstinate in the days of June, 1832. Any worthy landlord, whose establishment the insurrection injured, became leonine on seeing his dancing-room deserted, and let himself be killed in order to save orders as

represented by the book. At this time, which was at once heroic and bourgeois, in the presence of ideas which had their knights, interest had their Paladins, and the prosaicism of the motive took away none of the bravery of the movement. The decrease of a pile of crowns made bankers sing the *Marsellaise*, men lyrically shed their blood for the till, and defended with Lacedæmonian enthusiasm the shop, that immense diminutive of the country. Altogether there was a good deal that was very serious in all this; social interests were entering in a contest, while awaiting the day when they would enter a state of equilibrium. Another sign of this time was the anarchy mingled with the governmentalism (a barbarous term of the *juste-milieu* party), and men were for order without discipline. The drums played unexpectedly fancy calls, at the command of some colonel of the National Guard: one captain went under fire through inspiration, while some National Guards fought "for the idea," and on their own account. In moments of a crisis on "days" men followed the advice of their chiefs less than their own instincts, and there were in the army of order real guerilleros, some of the sword like Fannicot, and others of the pen like Henry Fonfrède. Civilization, unhappily represented at this period more by an aggregation of interests than by a group of principles, was, or believed itself to be, in danger; it uttered the alarm cry, and every man, constituting himself a centre, defended, succored, and protected it, in his own way, and the first-comer took on himself to save society.

Zeal sometimes went as far as extermination; a platoon of National Guards constituted themselves of their own authority a council of war, and tried and executed in five minutes an insurgent prisoner. It was an improvisation of this nature which killed Jean Prouvaire. It is that ferocious Lynch law with which no party has the right to reproach another, for it is applied by the republic in America as by monarchy in Europe. This Lynch law was complicated by mistakes; on a day of riot a young poet of the name of Paul Aimé Garnier was pursued on the Place Royale at the bayonet's point, and only escaped by taking shelter under the gateway at No. 6. "*There's another of those St. Simonians,*" they shouted, and wished to kill him. Now he had under his arm a volume

of the Memoirs of the Duc de St. Simon; a National Guard read on the back the words *Saint Simon*, and shouted, "Death to him!" On June 6, 1832, a company of suburban National Guards, commanded by Captain Fannicot, to whom we have already referred, decimated the Rue de la Chanvrière for his own good pleasure, and on his own authority. This fact, singular though it is, was proved by the judicial report drawn up in consequence of the insurrection of 1832. Captain Fannicot, an impatient and bold bourgeois, a species of condottiere of order, and a fanatical and insubmissive governmentalist, could not resist the attraction of firing prematurely, and taking the barricade all by himself, that is to say, with his company. Exasperated at the successive apparition of the red flag and the old coat, which he took for the black flag, he loudly blamed the generals and commanders of corps, who were holding councils, as they did not think the decisive moment for assault had arrived, but were "letting the insurrection stew in its own gravy, according to a celebrated expression of one of them. As for him, he thought the barricade ripe, and as every thing that is ripe is bound to fall he made the attempt.

He commanded men as resolute as himself. "Madmen," a witness called them. His company, the same which had shot Jean Prouvaire, was the first of the battalion posted at the street corner. At the moment when it was least expected the captain dashed his men at the barricade, but this movement, executed with more good-will than strategy, cost Fannicot's company dearly. Before it had covered two-thirds of the street a general discharge from the barricade greeted it; four, the boldest men of all, running at the head, were shot down in point blank range at the very foot of the barricade, and this courageous mob of National Guards, very brave men, but not possessing the military tenacity, was compelled to fall back after a few moments, leaving fifteen corpses in the street. The momentary hesitation gave the insurgents time to reload, and a second and most deadly discharge assailed the company before the men were able to regain their shelter at the corner of the street. In a moment they were caught between two fires, and received the volley from the cannon, which, having no orders to the contrary, did not cease firing. The intrepid and imprudent Faunicot was

one of those killed by this round of grape-shot: he was laid low by the cannon. This attack, which was more furious than serious, irritated Enjolras.

"The asses!" he said, "they have their men killed and expend our ammunition for nothing."

Enjolras spoke like the true general of the riot that he was: insurrection and repression do not fight with equal arms; for the insurrection, which can be soon exhausted, has only a certain number of rounds to fire and of combatants to expend. An expended cartouche-box and a killed man cannot have their place filled up. Repression, on the other hand, having the army, does not count men, and bare Vincennes does not count rounds. Repression has as many regiments as the barricade has men, and as many arsenals as the barricade has cartouche-boxes. Hence these are always contests of one man against a hundred, which ever end by the destruction of the barricade, unless revolution, suddenly dashing up, casts into the balance its flashing archangel's glaive. Such things happen, and then every thing rises, paving-stones get into a state of ebullition and popular redoubts swarm. Paris has a sovereign tremor, the *quid divinum* is evolved: there is in August 10 or a July 29 in the air, a prodigious light appears, the yawning throat of force recoils, and the army, that lion, sees that prophet, France, standing erect and tranquil before it. In the chaos of feelings and passions which defend a barricade there is everything: bravery, youth, the point of honor, enthusiasm, the ideal, conviction, the obstinacy of the gambler, and above all intermitting gleams of hope. One of these intermittences, one of these vague quiverings of hope, suddenly rang along the Chanvrière barricade at the most unexpected moment.

"Listen," Enjolras, who was ever on the watch, exclaimed, "I fancy that Paris is waking up."

It is certain that on the morning of June 6 the insurrection had for an hour or two a certain reanimation. The obstinacy of the tocsin of St. Merry aroused a few inclinations, and barricades were begun in the Rue de Poirier and in the Rue du Graulliers. In front of the Porte St. Martin, a young man armed with a gun attacked a squadron of cavalry alone, unprotected, and on the open

boulevard he knelt down, raised his gun, fired and killed the major, and then turned away, saying, *There's another who will do us no more mischief.* He was cut down. In the Rue St. Denis a woman fired at the National Guard from behind a Venetian shutter, and the wooden laths could be seen to tremble every moment. A boy of fourteen was arrested in the Rue de la Cossonnerie with his pockets full of cartridges, and several guard-houses were attacked. At the entrance of the Rue Bertin-Poirée a very sharp and quite unexpected fusillade greeted a regiment of cuirassiers, at the head of which rode General Cavaignac de Baragne. In the Rue Planche Mibray, old crockery and household utensils were thrown from the roofs down on the troops; this was a bad sign, and when Marshal Soult was informed of the fact, Napoleon's old lieutenant became pensive, for he remembered Suchet's remark at Saragossa: *We are lost when old women empty their pots de chambre on our heads.* These general symptoms manifested at a moment when the riots were supposed to be localized, this fever of anger which regained the upper hand, these Will-o'-the-wisps flying here and there, over the profound masses of combustible matter which are called the faubourgs of Paris, and all the accompanying facts, rendered the chiefs anxious, and they hastened to extinguish the first outbreak of fire. Until these sparks were quenched the attacks on the barricades Mantuée, de la Chanvrerie, and St. Merry were deferred, so that all might be finished at one blow. Columns of troops were sent through the streets in a state of fermentation, sweeping the large streets and sounding the smaller ones, on the right and on the left, at one moment slowly and cautiously, at another at the double. The troops broke open the doors of houses whence firing was heard, and at the same time cavalry manœuvres dispersed the groups on the boulevards. This repression was not effected without turmoil, and that tumultuous noise peculiar to collisions between the army and the people, and it was this that had attracted Enjolras' attention in the intervals between the cannonading and the platoon fire. Moreover, he had seen wounded men carried along the end of the street on litters, and said to Courfeyrac, "Those wounded are not our handiwork."

The hope lasted but a short time, and the

gleam was quickly eclipsed. In less than half an hour what there was in the air vanished, it was like a flash of lightning without thunder, and the insurgents felt that leaden pall, which the indifference of the people casts upon abandoned obstinate men, fall upon them again. The general movement, which seemed to have been obscurely designed, failed, and the attention of the minister of war and the strategy of the generals could now be concentrated on the three or four barricades that remained standing. The sun rose on the horizon, and an insurgent addressed Enjolras,—

"We are hungry here. Are we really going to die like this, without eating?"

Enjolras, still leaning at his parapet, made a nod of affirmation, without taking his eyes off the end of the street.

## CHAPTER COXL.

### GAVROCHE OUTSIDE.

COURFEYRAC, seated on a stone by the side of Enjolras, continued to insult the cannon, and each time that the gloomy shower of projectiles which is called a grape-shot passed with its monstrous noise he greeted it with an ironical remark.

"You are wasting your breath, my poor old brute, and I feel sorry for you, as your row is thrown away. That is not thunder, but a cough."

And those around him laughed. Courfeyrac and Bossuet, whose valiant good humor increased with danger, made up for the want of food, like Madame Scarron, by jests, and as wine was short, poured out gayety for all.

"I admire Enjolras," Bossuet said, "and his temerity astonishes me. He lives alone, which, perhaps, renders him a little sad; and Enjolras is to be pitied for his greatness, which attaches him to widowhood. We fellows have all, more or less, mistresses, who make us mad, that is to say brave, and when a man is as full of love as a tiger the least he can do is to fight like a lion. That is a way of avenging ourselves for the tricks which our grisettes pay us. Roland lets himself be killed to vex Angelique, and all our heroism comes from our women. A man without a woman is like a pistol without a hammer and it is the woman who makes the man go off. Well, Enjolras has no woman, he is not in

love, and finds means to be intrepid. It is extraordinary that a man can be cold as ice and daring as fire."

Enjolras did not appear to listen; but any one who had been near him might have heard him murmur, in a low voice, *Patria*. Bossuet laughed again, when Courfeyrac shouted,—

"Here's something fresh."

And assuming the voice of a groom of the chambers who announces a visitor, he added,

"Mr. Eight-Pounder."

In fact, a new character had come on the stage; it was a second piece of artillery. The gunners rapidly got it into position by the side of the first one, and this was the beginning of the end. A few minutes later both guns, being actively served, were at work against the barricade, and the platoon fire of the line and the suburban National Guards supported the artillery. Another cannonade was audible some distance off. At the same time as the two guns were furiously assaulting the redoubt in the Rue de la Chanvrière, two other pieces placed in position, one in the Rue St. Denis, the other in the Rue Aubrey-le-Boucher, were pounding the St. Merry barricade. The four guns formed a lugubrious echo to each other, and the barks of the grim dogs of war responded to each other. Of the two guns now opened on the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrière, one fired shell, the other solid shot. The gun which fired the latter was pointed at a slight elevation, and the firing was so calculated that the ball struck the extreme edge of the crest of the barricades, and hurled the broken paving-stones on the heads of the insurgents. This mode of fire was intended to drive the combatants from the top of the redoubt, and compel them to close up in the interior; that is to say, it announced the assault. Once the combatants were driven from the top of the barricade by the cannon and from the windows of the public-house by the canister, the columns of attack could venture into the street without being aimed at, perhaps without ever being seen, suddenly escalate the barricade, as on the previous evening, and take it by surprise.

"The annoyance of the guns must be reduced," said Enjolras, and he shouted, "Fire at the artillerymen."

All were ready,—the barricade, which had

so long been silent, was belted with flame seven or eight rounds succeeded each other with a sort of rage and joy; the street was filled with a blinding smoke, and at the expiration of a few minutes there might be confusedly seen through the mist, all striped with flame, two-thirds of the artillerymen lying under the gun-wheels. Those who remained standing continued to serve the gun with a stern tranquillity, but the fire was reduced.

"Things are going well," said Bossuet to Enjolras, "that is a success."

Enjolras shook his head, and replied,—

"Another quarter of an hour of the success, and there will not be a dozen cartridges left in the barricade."

It appears that Gavroche heard the remark for Courfeyrac all at once perceived somebody in the street, at the foot of the barricade amid the shower of bullets. Gavroche had fetched a hamper from the pot-house, passed through the gap, and was quickly engaged in emptying into it the full cartouche-boxes of the National Guards killed on the slope of the barricade.

"What are you doing there?" Courfeyrac said.

Gavroche looked up.

"Citizen, I am filling my hamper."

"Do you not see the grape-shot?"

Gavroche replied,—

"Well it is raining, what then?"

Courfeyrac cried, "Come in."

"Directly," said Gavroche.

And with one bound he reached the street. It will be borne in mind that Fannicot's company, in retiring, left behind it a number of corpses; some twenty dead lay here and there all along the pavement of the street. That made twenty cartouche-boxes for Gavroche, and a stock of cartridges for the barricade. The smoke lay in the street like a fog, and any one who has seen a cloud in a mountain gorge, between two precipitous escarpments, can form an idea of this smoke contracted, and as it were rendered dense by the two dark lines of tall houses. It rose slowly, and was incessantly renewed; whence came a gradual obscurity, which dulled even the bright daylight. The combatants would scarce see each other from either end of the street, which was, however, very short. The darkness, probably desired and calculated on by the chiefs who were about to direct the

assault on the barricade, was useful for Gavroche. Under the cloak of this smoke, and thanks to his shortness, he was enabled to advance a considerable distance along the street unnoticed, and he plundered the first seven or eight cartouche-boxes without any great danger. He crawled on his stomach, galloped on all-fours, took his hamper in his teeth, writhed, glided, undulated, wound from one corpse to another, and emptied the cartouche-box like a monkey opens a nut. They did not cry to him from the barricade, to which he was still rather close, to return, for fear of attracting attention to him. On one corpse, which was a corporal's he found a powder-flask.

"For thirst," he said, as he put it in his pocket.

While moving forward he at length reached the point where the fog of the fire became transparent, so that the sharpshooters of the line drawn up behind their parapet of paving-stones, and the National Guard at the corner of the street, all at once pointed out to each other something stirring in the street. At the moment when Gavroche was taking the cartridges from a sergeant lying near a post a bullet struck the corpse.

"Oh! for shame," said Gavroche, "they are killing my dead for me."

A second bullet caused the stones to strike fire close to him, while a third upset his hamper. Gavroche looked and saw that it came from the National Guards. He stood upright, with his hair floating in the breeze, his hand on his hip, and his eyes fixed on the National Guards who were firing, and he sang,—

Ou est laid à Nanterre,  
C'est la faute à Voltaire,  
Et bête à Palaiseau,  
C'est la faute à Rousseau.

Then he picked up his hamper, put into it the cartridges scattered around without missing one, and walked toward the firing party, to despoil another cartouche-box. Then a fourth bullet missed him Gavroche sang,—

Je ne suis pas notaire,  
C'est la faute à Voltaire:  
Je suis petit oiseau,  
C'est la faute à Rousseau.

A fifth bullet only succeeded so far as to draw a third couplet from him,—

Joie est mon caractère,  
C'est la faute à Voltaire:  
Misère est mon trousseau,  
C'est la faute à Rousseau,

They went on for some time longer, and the sight was at once terrific and charming; Gavroche, while fired at, ridiculed the firing, and appeared to be greatly amused. He was like a sparrow deriding the sportsmen, and answered each discharge by a couplet. The troops aimed at him incessantly, and constantly missed him, and the National Guards and the soldiers laughed, while covering him. He lay down, then rose again, hid himself in a doorway, then bounded, disappeared, reappeared, ran off, came back, replied to the grape-shot by taking a sight, and all the while plundered cartridges, emptied boxes, and filled his hamper. The insurgents watched him, as they panted with anxiety, but while the barricade trembled he sang. He was not a child, he was not a man, he was a strange goblin gamin, and he resembled the invulnerable dwarf of the combat. The bullets ran after him, but he was more active than they; he played a frightful game of hide and seek with death: and each time that the snub-nosed face of the spectre approached the gamin gave it a fillip. One bullet, however, better aimed or more treacherous than the rest, at length struck the Will-o'-the-wisp lad; Gavroche was seen to totter and then sink. The whole barricade uttered a cry, but there was an Antæus in this pigmy: for a gamin to touch the pavement is like the giant touching the earth; and Gavroche had only fallen to rise again. He remained in a sitting posture, a long jet of blood ran down his face, he raised both arms in the air, looked in the direction whence the shot had come, and began singing,—

Je suis tombé par terre,  
C'est la faute à Voltaire:  
Le nez dans le ruisseau,  
C'est la faute à —

He did not finish, for a second shot from the same marksman stopped him short. This time he lay with his face on the pavement, and did not stir again. This little great soul had fled away.

## CHAPTER CCXLI.

### HOW A BROTHER BECOMES A FATHER.

THERE was at this very moment in the Luxembourg garden—for the eye of the drama

must be everywhere present—two lads holding each other's hand. One might be seven, the other five, years of age. As they were wet through with the rain they walked along sunshiny paths; the elder led the younger, both were in rags and pale, and they looked like wild birds. The younger said, "I am very hungry." The elder, who had already a protecting air, led his brother with the left hand, and had a switch in his right. They were alone in the garden, which was deserted, as the gates were closed by police order on account of the insurrection. The troops who had bivouacked there had issued forth for the exigences of the combat. How were these children here? Perhaps they had escaped from some guard-room where the door was left ajar; perhaps in the vicinity, at the Barrières d'Enfer, on the esplanade of the observatory, or in the neighboring square overshadowed by the cornice, on which may be read, *invenerunt parvulum pannis involutum*, there was some monte-bank's booth from which they had fled; perhaps they had on the previous evening kept out of sight of the rangers at the Luxembourg, and had spent the night in one of those summer-houses in which people read the papers; the fact is, that they were wandering about and seemed to be free. To be a wanderer, and to appear free, is to be lost, and these poor little creatures were really lost. The two lads were the same about whom Gavroche had been in trouble, and whom the reader will remember, sons of Thénardier, let out to Magnon, attributed to M. Gillenormand, and now leaves fallen from all these rootless branches, and rolled along the ground by the wind.

Their clothes, clean in the time of Magnon, and which served her as a prospectus to M. Gillenormand, had become rags; and these beings henceforth belonged to the statistics of "deserted children," whom the police pick up, lose, and find again on the pavement of Paris. It needed the confusion of such a day as this for these two poor little wretches to be in this garden. If the rangers had noticed these rags they would have expelled them, for poor little lads do not enter public gardens, and yet it ought to be remembered that as children they have a right to flowers. They were here, thanks to the locked gates, and were committing an offence; they had stepped into the garden and remained there.

Though locked gates do not give a holiday to the keepers, and their surveillance is supposed to continue, it grows weaker and rests; and the keepers, also affected by the public affairs, and more busied about the outside than the inside, did not look at the garden, and had not seen the two delinquents. It had rained on the previous evening, and even slightly on this morning, but in June showers are of no great consequence. People hardly perceive, an hour after a storm, that this fair beauteous day has wept, for the earth dries up as rapidly as a child's cheek. At this moment of the solstice the midday light is, so to speak, poignant, and it seizes everything. It clings to and spreads itself over the earth with a sort of suction, and we might say that the sun is thirsty. A shower is a glass of water, and rain is at once drunk up. In the morning everything glistens, in the afternoon everything is dusty. Nothing is so admirable as verdure cleansed by the rain and dried by the sun; it is warm freshness. Gardens and fields, having water in their roots and sunshine in their flowers, become censers of incense, and smoke with all their perfumes at once. Everything laughs, sings, and offers itself, and we feel softly intoxicated; summer is a temporary Paradise, and the sun helps man to be patient.

There are beings who ask no more, living creatures who, having the azure of heaven, say, it is enough, dreamers absorbed in the prodigy, drawing from the idolatry of nature indifference to good and evil, contemplators of the Cosmos, radiantly distracted from man, who do not understand how people can trouble themselves about the hunger of one person, the thirst of another, the nudity of the poor man in winter, the lymphatic curvature of a small backbone, the truck bed, the garret, the cell, and the rags of young, shivering girls, when they can dream under the trees: they are peaceful and terrible minds, pitilessly satisfied, and, strange to say, infinitude suffices them. They ignore the great want of man, the finite which admits of an embrace, and do not dream of the finite which admits of progress, that sublime token. The indefinite, which springs from the divine and human combination of the infinite and the finite, escapes them, and provided that they can be face to face with immensity, they smile. They never feel joy, but always ecstasy, and their life is one of abstraction.

The history of humanity is to them but a grand detail: the All is not in it, the All remains outside of it. Of what use is it to trouble one's self about that item, man? Man suffers, it is possible, but just look at Aldebaran rising! The mother has no milk left, the new-born babe is dying. I know nothing of all that, but just look at the marvellous rose made by a sprig of hawthorn when looked at through a microscope, just compare the finest Mechlin lace with that. These thinkers forget to love, and the zodiac has such an attraction over them that it prevents them seeing the weeping child. God eclipses their soul, and they are a family of minds at once great and little. Homer belonged to it, so did Goethe, and possibly Lafontaine, magnificent egotists of the infinite, calm spectators of sorrow, who do not see Nero if the weather be fine; from whom the sun hides the pyre; who would look at a guillotining to seek a light effect in it; who hear neither cries nor sobs, nor the death-rattle nor the tocsin, for whom everything is good, since there is the month of May; who so long as they have clouds of purple and gold above their heads declare themselves satisfied, and who are determined to be happy until the radiance of the stars and the song of birds are exhausted.

These are dark radiances, and they do not suspect that they are to be pitied. But they are certainly so, for the man who does not weep does not see. We must admire and pity them, as we would pity and admire a being at once night and day, who had no eyes under his brows, but a star in the centre of his forehead. The indifference of these thinkers is, according to some, a grand philosophy. Be it so, but in this superiority there is infirmity. A man may be immortal and limp, as witness Vulcan, and he may be more than man and less than man; there is immense incompleteness in nature, and who knows whether the sun be not blind? but in that case, whom to trust? *Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?* Hence, certain geniuses, certain human deities, star-men, might be mistaken? what is above at the summit, at the zenith, which pours so much light on the earth, might see little, see badly, not see at all? is not that desperate? no: but what is there above the sun? God.

On June 6, 1832, at about eleven in the forenoon, the Luxembourg, solitary and de-

populated, was delicious. The quincunxes and flower-beds sent balm and dazzlement into the light, and the branches, wild in the brilliancy of midday, seemed trying to embrace each other. There was in the sycamores a twittering of linnets, the sparrows were triumphal, and the woodpeckers crept along the chestnut, gently tapping the holes of the bark. The beds accepted the legitimate royalty of the lilies, for the most august of perfumes is that which issues from whiteness. The sharp odor of the carnations was inhaled, and the old rooks of Marie de Medicis made love on the lofty trees. The sun gilded, purpled, and illumined the tulips, which are nothing but all the varieties of flame made into flowers. All around the tulip-beds hummed the bees, the flashes of these fire-flowers. All was grace and gayety, even the coming shower, for that relapse, by which the lilies and honeysuckles would profit, had nothing alarming about it, and the swallows made the delicious menace of flying low. What was there aspired happiness: life smelt pleasantly, and all this nature exhaled candor, help, assistance, paternity, caresses, and dawn. The thoughts that fell from heaven were as soft as a little child's hand we kiss. The statues under the trees, nude and white, were robed in dresses of shadow shot with light; these goddesses were all ragged with sunshine, and beams hung from them on all sides. Around the great basin the earth was already so dry as to be parched, and there was a breeze sufficiently strong to create here and there small riots of dust. A few yellow leaves remaining from the last autumn joyously pursued each other, and seemed to be sporting.

The abundance of light had something strangely reassuring about it; life, sap, heat, and exhalations overflowed, and the enormity of the source could be felt beneath creation. In all these blasts penetrated with love, in this movement of reflections and gleams, in this prodigious expenditure of beams, and in this indefinite outpouring of fluid gold, the prodigality of the inexhaustible could be felt, and behind this splendor, as behind a curtain of flames, glimpses of God, that millionaire of the stars, could be caught. Thanks to the sand, there was not a speck of mud, and, thanks to the rain, there was not a grain of ash. The bouquets had just performed their ablutions, and all the velvets, all the satins,

all the varnish, and all the gold which issue from the earth in the shape of flowers, were irreproachable. This magnificence was cleanly, and the grand silence of happy nature filled the garden. A heavenly silence, compatible with a thousand strains of music, the fondling tones from the nests, the buzzing of the swarms, and the palpitations of the wind. The whole harmony of the season was blended into a graceful whole, the entrances and exits of spring took place in the desired order, the lilacs were finishing, and the jessamine beginning, a few flowers were retarded, a few insects before their time, and the vanguard of the red butterflies of June fraternized with the rear guard of the white butterflies of May. The plane trees were putting on a fresh skin, and the breeze formed undulations in the magnificent enormity of the chestnut-trees. It was splendid. A veteran from the adjoining barracks who was looking through the railings said, "Nature is wearing her full-dress uniform."

All nature was breakfasting, and creation was at table; it was the hour: the great blue cloth was laid in heaven, and the great green one on earth, while the sun gave an *à giorno* illumination. God was serving his universal meal, and each being had its pasture or its pasty. The wood-pigeon found hemp-seed, the greenfinch found millet, the goldfinch found chickweed, the redbreast found worms, the bee found flowers, the fly found infusoria, and the bird found flies. They certainly devoured each other to some extent, which is the mystery of evil mingled with good, but not a single animal had an empty stomach. The two poor abandoned boys had got near the great basin, and somewhat confused by all this light, tried to hide themselves, which is the instinct of the poor and the weak in the presence of magnificence, even when it is impersonal, and they kept behind the swan's house. Now and then, at intervals when the wind blew, confused shouts, a rumor, a sort of noisy death-rattle which was musketry, and dull blows which were cannon-shots, could be heard. There was smoke above the roofs in the direction of the Halles, and a bell which seemed to be summoning sounded in the distance. The children did not seem to notice the noises, and the younger lad repeated every now and then in a low voice, "I am hungry."

Almost simultaneously with the two boys

another couple approached the basin, consisting of a man of about fifty, leading by the hand a boy of six years of age. It was doubtless a father with his son. The younger of the two had a cake in his hand. At this period certain contiguous houses in the Rue Madame and the Rue d'Enfer had keys to the Luxembourg, by which the lodgers could let themselves in when the gates were locked, but this permission has since been withdrawn. This father and son evidently came from one of these houses. The two poor little creatures saw "this gentleman" coming, and hid themselves a little more. He was a citizen, and perhaps the same whom Marius through his love-fever had one day heard near the same great basin counselling his son "to avoid excesses." He had an affable and haughty look, and a mouth which, as it did not close, always smiled. This mechanical smile, produced by too much jaw and too little skin, shows the teeth rather than the soul. The boy with the bitten cake he had and did not finish, seemed uncomfortably full; the boy was dressed in a National Guard's uniform, on account of the riots, and the father remained in civilian garb for the sake of prudence. Father and son had halted near the great basin, in which the two swans were disporting. This cit appeared to have a special admiration for the swans, and resembled them in the sense that he walked like them. At this moment the swans were swimming, which is their principal talent, and were superb. Had the two little fellows listened, and been of an age to comprehend, they might have overheard the remarks of a serious man; the father was saying to his son,—

"The sage lives contented with little; look at me, my son, I do not care for luxury. You never see me in a coat glistening with gold and precious stones; I leave that false lustre to badly organized minds."

Here the deep shouts which came from the direction of the Halles broke out, with a redoublement of bells and noise.

"What is that?" the lad asked.

The father replied,—

"That is the saturnalia."

All at once he perceived the two little ragged boys standing motionless behind the swan's green house.

"Here is the beginning," he said.

And after a silence he added,—



"Anarchy enters this garden."

In the meanwhile the boy bit the cake, spat it out again, and suddenly began crying.

"Why are you crying?" the father asked.

"I am no longer hungry," said the boy.

The father's smile became more marked than ever.

"You need not be hungry to eat a cake."

"I am tired of cake. It is so filling."

"Don't you want any more?"

"No."

The father showed him the swans.

"Throw it to those palmipedes."

The boy hesitated, for if he did not want any more cake that was no reason to give it away."

The father continued,—

"Be humane: you ought to have pity on animals."

And, taking the cake from his son, he threw it into the basin, when it fell rather near the bank. The swans were some distance off, near the centre of the basin, and engaged with some prey: they had seen neither the citizen nor the cake. The citizen, feeling that the cake ran a risk of being lost, and affected by this useless shipwreck, began a telegraphic agitation, which eventually attracted the attention of the swans. They noticed something floating on the surface tacked, like the vessels they are, and came towards the cake slowly, with the majesty that befits white beasts.

"Swans understand signs," the bourgeois, pleased at his own cleverness, said.

At this moment the distant tumult of the city was suddenly swollen. This time it was sinister, and there are some puffs of wind which speak more distinctly than others. The one which blew at this moment distinctly brought up the rolling of drums, shouts, platoon fires, and the mournful replies of the tocsin, and the cannon. This coincided with a black cloud, which suddenly veiled the sky. The swans had not yet reached the cake.

"Let us go home," the father said, "they are attacking the Tuileries."

He seized his son's hand again, and then continued,—

"From the Tuileries to the Luxembourg there is only the distance which separates the royalty from the peerage; and that is not far. It is going to rain musketry."

He looked at the cloud,—

"And perhaps we shall have rain of the

other sort too; heaven is interfering: the younger branch is condemned. Let us make haste home."

"I should like to see the swans eat the cake," said the boy.

"It would be imprudent," the father answered; and he led away his little bourgeois. The son, regretting the swans, turned his head toward the basin, until an elbow of the quincunxes concealed it from him. The two little vagabonds had in the meanwhile approached the cake simultaneously with the swans. It was floating on the water; the smaller boy looked at the cake; the other looked at the citizen, who was going off. Father and son entered the labyrinth of trees that runs to the grand staircase of the clump of trees in the direction of the Rue Madame. When they were no longer in sight, the elder hurriedly lay down full length on the rounded bank of the basin, and holding by his left hand, while bending over the water, till he all but fell in, he stretched out his switch toward the cake with the other. The swans, seeing the enemy, hastened up, and in hastening made a chest-effort, useful to the little fisher; the water flowed back in front of the swans, and one of the gentle, concentric undulations gently impelled the cake toward the boy's switch. When the swans got up the stick was touching the cake; the lad gave a quick blow, startled the swans, seized the cake and got up. The cake was soaking, but they were hungry and thirsty. The elder boy divided the cake into two parts, a large one and a small one, kept the small one for himself, and gave the larger piece to his brother, saying,—

*"Shove that into your gun."*

## CHAPTER CXXLII.

### JEAN VALJEAN'S REVENGE.

MARIUS rushed out of the barricade, and Combeferre followed him; but it was too late, and Gavroche was dead. Combeferre brought in the hamper of cartridges, and Marius the boy. Alas! he thought he was requiting the son for what the father had done for his father; but Thénardier had brought in his father alive, while he brought in the lad dead. When Marius re-entered the barricade with Gavroche in his arms his face was inundated with blood, like the boy's;

for, at the very instant when he stooped to pick up Gavroche, a bullet had grazed his skull, but he had not noticed it. Courfeyrac took off his neckcloth and bound Marius' forehead; Gavroche was deposited on the same table with Mabœuf, and the black shawl was spread over both bodies; it was large enough for the old man and the child. Combeferre distributed the cartridges which he had brought in, and they gave each man fifteen rounds to fire. Jean Valjean was still at the same spot, motionless on his bench. When Combeferre offered him his fifteen cartridges he shook his head.

"That is a strange eccentric," Combeferre said in a whisper to Enjolras. "He manages not to fight inside the barricade."

"Which does not prevent him from defending it," Enjolras answered.

"Heroism has its original characters," Combeferre resumed.

And Courfeyrac, who overheard him, said,—

"He is a different sort from Father Mabœuf."

It is a thing worth mentioning, that the fire hurtled at the barricade scarce disturbed the interior. Those who have never passed the tornado of a warfare of this nature cannot form any idea of the singular moments of calmness mingled with these convulsions. Men come and go, they talk, they jest, they idle. A friend of ours heard a combatant say to him, in the midst of the grape-shot, "*It is like being at a bachelor's breakfast here.*" There-doubt in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, we repeat, appeared internally most calm; and all the incidents and phases were, or would shortly be, exhausted. The position had become from critical menacing, and from menacing was probably about to become desperate. In proportion as the situation grew darker an heroic gleam more and more purpled the barricade. Enjolras commanded it in the attitude of a young Spartan, devoting his bare sword to the gloomy genius, Epictetus. Combeferre, with an apron tied round him, was dressing the wounded. Bossuet and Feuilly were making cartridges with the powder-flask found by Gavroche on the dead corporal, and Bossuet was saying to Feuilly, "*We are soon going to take the diligencé for another planet.*" Courfeyrac, seated on the few paving-stones which he had set aside near Enjolras, was preparing and arranging

an entire arsenal; his sword-cane, his gun two bolster-pistols, and a club, with the ease of a girl setting a small Dunkerque in order. Jean Valjean was silently looking at the wall facing him, and a workman was fastening on his head, with a piece of string, a broad-brimmed straw-bonnet of Mother Hucheloup's, *for fear of sun-strokes*, as he said. The young men of the Aix Cougourde were gayly chatting together, as if desirous to talk patois for the last time. Joly, who had taken down Widow Hucheloup's mirror, was examining his tongue in it; while a few combatants who had discovered some nearly mouldering crusts of bread in a drawer, were eating them greedily. Marius was anxious about what his father would say to him.

We must lay a stress upon a psychological fact peculiar to barricades, for nothing which characterizes this surprising war of street ought to be omitted. Whatever the internal tranquillity to which we have just referred may be, the barricade does not the less remain a vision for those who are inside it. There is an apocalypse in a civil war, all the darkness of the unknown world is mingled with these stern flashes, revolutions as sphynxes, and any one who has stood behind a barricade believes that he has gone through a dream. What is felt at these spots, as we have shown in the matter of Marius, and whose consequences we shall see, is more than less than life. On leaving a barricade, a man no longer knows what he has seen; he may have been terrible, but he is ignorant of the fact. He has been surrounded there by combating ideas which possessed human faces, and had his head in the light of fortuity. There were corpses laid low and phantoms standing upright; and the hours were colossal, and seemed hours of eternity. A man has lived in death, and shadows have passed. What was it? he has seen hands of which was blood; it was a deafening din, but at the same time a startling silence; there were open mouths that cried, and other open mouths which were silent, and men were in smoke, perhaps in night. A man fancies he has touched the sinister dripping of unknown depths, and he looks at something red which he has in his nails, but he no longer recalls any thing.

Let us return to the Rue de la Chanvrerie. Suddenly, between two discharges, the distant sound of a clock striking was heard.

"It is mid-day," said Combeferre.

The twelve strokes had not died out ere Enjolras drew himself up to his full height, and hurled the loud cry from the top of the barricade,—

"Take up the paving stones into the house, and line the windows with them. One half of you to the stones, the other half to the muskets. There is not a moment to lose."

A party of sappers, with their axes on their shoulders, had just appeared in battle array at the end of the street. This could only be the head of a column: and of what column? evidently the column of attack; for the sappers ordered to demolish the barricade always precede the troops told off to escalate it. It was plain that the moment was at hand which M. Clermont Tonnerre called in 1822 "the last attempt."

Enjolras' order was carried out with that correct speed peculiar to ships and barricades, the only two battlefields whence escape is impossible. In less than a minute two-thirds of the paving-stones which Enjolras had ordered to be piled up against the door of Corinth were carried to the first floor and attic, and before a second minute had passed these paving-stones, artistically laid on one another, walled up one half of the window. A few spaces carefully arranged by Feuilly, the chief constructor, allowed the gun-barrels to pass through, This armament of the windows was the more easily effected because the grape-shot had ceased. The two cannon were now firing solid shot at the centre of the barricade, in order to make a hole, and if possible a breach for the assault. When the stones intended for the final assault were in their places, Enjolras carried to the first floor the bottles he had placed under the table on which Mabœuf lay.

"Who will drink that?" Bossuet asked him.

"They will," Enjolras answered.

Then the ground-floor window was also barricaded, and the iron bars which closed the door at night were held in readiness. The fortress was complete, the barricade was the rampart, and the wineshop the keep. With the paving stones left over, the gap was stopped up. As the defenders of a barricade are always obliged to save their ammunition, and the besiegers are aware of the fact, the latter combine their arrangements with a

sort of irritating leisure, expose themselves before the time to the fire, though more apparently than in reality, and take their ease. The preparations for the attack are always made with a certain methodical slowness, and after that comes the thunder. This slowness enabled Enjolras to revise and render everything perfect. He felt that since such men were about to die their death must be a masterpiece. He said to Marius,—

"We are the two chiefs. I am going to give the final orders inside, while you remain outside and watch."

Marius posted himself in observation on the crest of the barricade, while Enjolras had the door of the kitchen, which it will be remembered served as an ambulance, nailed up.

"No spattering on the wounded," he said.

He gave his final instructions in the ground-floor room, in a sharp but wonderfully calm voice, and Feuilly listened and answered in the name of all.

"Have axes ready on the first floor to cut down the stair. Have you them?"

"Yes," Feuilly answered.

"How many?"

"Two axes and a crowbar."

"Very good. In all twenty-six fighting men left. How many guns are there?"

"Thirty-four."

"Eight too many. Keep those guns loaded like the others, and within reach. Place your sabres and pistols in your belts. Twenty men to the barricade. Six will ambush themselves in the garret and at the first floor window, to fire on the assailants through the loop holes in the paving-stones. There must not be an idle workman here. Presently, when the drummer sounds the charge, the twenty men below will rush to the barricade, and the first to arrive will be the best placed."

These arrangements made, he turned to Javert, and said to him,—

"I have not forgotten you."

And laying a pistol on the table he added,—

"The last man to leave here will blow out this spy's brains."

"Here?" a voice answered.

"No, let us not have this corpse near ours. It is easy to stride over the small barricade in Mondétour lane, as it is only four feet high. This man is securely bound, so lead him there and execute him."

Some one was at this moment even more stoical than Enjolras,—it was Javert. Here Jean Valjean appeared; he was mixed up with the group of insurgents, but stepped forward and said to Enjolras,

“Are you the commandant?”

“Yes.”

“You thanked me just now.”

“In the name of the Republic. The barricade has two saviors, Marius Pontmercy and yourself.”

“Do you think that I deserve a reward?”

“Certainly.”

“Well, then, I ask one.”

“What is it?”

“To let me blow out that man’s brains myself.”

Javert raised his head, saw Jean Valjean, gave an imperceptible start and said,—“It is fair.”

As for Enjolras, he was reloading his gun. He looked around him.

“Is there no objection?”

And he turned to Jean Valjean.

“Take the spy.”

Jean Valjean took possession of Javert by seating himself on the end of the table. He seized the pistol, and a faint click showed that he had cocked it. Almost at the same moment the bugle-call was heard.

“Mind yourselves,” Marius shouted from the top of the barricade.

Javert began laughing that noiseless laugh peculiar to him, and, looking intently at the insurgents, said to them,—

“You are no healthier than I am.”

“All outside,” Enjolras cried.

The insurgents rushed tumultuously forth, and as they passed, Javert smote them on the back, so to speak, with the expression, “We shall meet again soon.”

So soon as Jean Valjean was alone with Javert, he undid the rope which fastened the prisoner round the waist, the knot of which was under the table. After this he made him a signal to rise. Javert obeyed with that indefinable smile, in which the supremacy of enchained authority is condensed. Jean Valjean seized Javert by the Martingale, as he would have taken an ox by its halter, and dragging him after him, quitted the wine-shop slowly, for Javert, having his feet hobbled, could only take very short steps. Jean Valjean held the pistol in his hand, and they thus crossed the inner trapeze of the barricade;

the insurgents, prepared for the imminent attack, turned their backs.

Marius alone, placed at the left extremity of the barricade, saw them pass. This group of the victim and his hangman was illumined by the sepulchral gleams which he had in his soul. Jean Valjean forced Javert to climb over the barricade with some difficulty, but did not loosen the chord. When they had crossed the bar, they found themselves alone in the lane, and no one could now see them, for the elbow formed by the houses hid them from the insurgents. The corpses removed from the barricade formed a horrible pile a few paces from them. Among the dead could be distinguished a livid face, dishevelled hair, a pierced hand, and a half-naked female bosom; it was Eponine. Javert looked askance at this dead girl, and said with profound calmness,—

“I fancy I know that girl.”

Then he turned to Jean Valjean who placed the pistol under his arm, and fixed on Javert a glance which had no need of words to say, “Javert, it is I.”

Javert answered, “take your revenge.”

Jean Valjean took a knife from his pocket and opened it.

“A clasp-knife,” Javert exclaimed. “You are right, that suits you better,”

Jean Valjean cut the martingale which Javert had round his neck, then he cut the ropes on his wrists, and stooping down, those on his feet; then rising again, he said, “You are free.”

It was not easy to astonish Javert, still, master though he was of himself, he could not suppress his emotion; he stood gaping and motionless, while Jean Valjean continued,—

“I do not believe that I shall leave this place. Still if by accident I do, I live under the name of Fauchelevent, at No. 7, Rue de l’Homme Armé.”

Javert gave a tigerish frown, which opened a corner of his mouth, and muttered between his teeth,—

“Take care.”

“Begone,” said Jean Valjean.

Javert added,

“You said Fauchelevent, Rue de l’Homme Armé?”

“No. 7.”

Javert repeated in a low voice,—“No. 7.”

He rebuttoned his frock coat, restored his

military stiffness between his shoulders, made a half turn, crossed his arms while supporting his chin with one of his hands, and walked off in the direction of the Halles. Jean Valjean looked after him. After going a few yards Javert turned and said,—

“You annoy me. I would sooner be killed by you.”

Javert did not even notice that he no longer addressed Jean Valjean in the second person singular.

“Begone,” said Valjean.

Javert retired slowly, and a moment after turned the corner of the Rue des Prêcheurs. When Javert had disappeared, Jean Valjean discharged the pistol in the air, and then returned to the barricade, saying,—

“It is all over.”

This is what had taken place in the meanwhile. Marius, more occupied with the outside than the inside, had not hitherto attentively regarded the spy fastened up at the darkened end of the ground-floor room. When he saw him in the open daylight bestriding the barricade, he recognized him, and a sudden hope entered his mind. He remembered the inspector of the Rue de Pontoise, and the two pistols he had given him, which he, Marius, had employed at this very barricade, and he not only remembered his face but his name.

This recollection, however, was foggy and disturbed, like all his ideas. It was not an affirmation he made so much as a question which he asked himself. “Is that not the police inspector, who told me that his name was Javert?” Marius shouted to Enjolras, who had just stationed himself at the other end of the barricade,—

“Enjolras?”

“Well?”

“What is that man’s name?”

“Which man?”

“The police agent. Do you know his name?”

“Of course I do, for he told it to us.”

“What is it?”

“Javert.”

Marius started, but at this moment a pistol shot was heard, and Jean Valjean reappeared, saying, “It is all over.” A dark chill crossed Marius’ heart.

## CHAPTER CCXLIII.

THE DEAD ARE RIGHT AND THE LIVING ARE NOT WRONG.

THE last hours of the barricade were about to begin, and everything added to the tragical majesty of this supreme moment; a thousand mysterious sounds in the air, the breathing of armed masses set in motion in streets which could not be seen, the intermittent gallop of cavalry, the heavy rumor of artillery, the platoon firing and the cannonade, crossing each other in the labyrinth of Paris; the smoke of the battle rising golden above the roofs, distant and vaguely terrible cries, flashes of menace everywhere, the tocsin of St. Merry, which now had the sound of a sob, the mildness of the season, the splendor of the sky full of sunshine and clouds, the beauty of the day and the fearful silence of the houses. For, since the previous evening, the two rows of houses in the Rue de la Chanvrerie had become two walls, ferocious walls with closed doors, closed windows, and closed shutters.

At that day, so different from the present time, when the hour arrived in which the people wished to end with a situation which had lasted too long, with a wounded charter or a legal country, when the universal wrath was diffused in the atmosphere, when the city consented to an upheaving of paving-stones, when the insurrection made the bourgeoisie smile by whispering its watchword in their ear, then the inhabitant, impregnated with riot, so to speak, was the auxiliary of the combatant, and the house fraternized with the improvised fortress which it supported. When the situation was not ripe, when the insurrection was not decidedly accepted, when the masses disavowed the movement, it was all over with the combatants, the town was changed into a desert round the revolt, minds were chilled, the asylums were walled up, and the street became converted into a defile to help the army in taking the barricade. A people cannot be forced to move faster than it wishes by a surprise, and woe to the man who tries to compel it; a people will not put up with it, and then it abandons the insurrection to itself. The insurgents became lepers; a house is an escarpment, a door is a refusal, and a façade is a wall. This wall sees, hears, and will not; it might open and

save you, but no, the wall is a judge, and it looks at you and condemns you. What gloomy things are these closed houses! they seem dead though they are alive, and life, which is, as it were, suspended, clings to them. No one has come out for the last four-and-twenty hours, but no one is absent. In the interior of this rock people come and go, retire to bed and rise again; they are in the bosom of their family, they eat and drink, and are afraid, terrible to say. Fear excuses this formidable inhospitality, and the alarm offers extenuating circumstances. At times even, and this has been witnessed, the fear becomes a passion, and terror may be changed into fury, and prudence into rage; hence the profound remark, "The enraged moderates." There are flashes of supreme terror, from which passion issues like a mournful smoke. "What do these people want? they are never satisfied, they compromise peaceable men. As if we had not had revolutions of that nature! what have they come to do here? let them get out of this as they can. All the worse for them, it is their fault, and they have only what they deserve. That does not concern us. Look at our poor street torn to pieces by cannon: they are a heap of scamps, and be very careful not to open the door." And the house assumes the aspect of a tomb: the insurgent dies a lingering death before their door; he sees the grape-shot and naked sabres arrive; if he cries out, he knows there are people who hear him, but will not help him; there are walls which might protect him, and men who might save him, and these walls have ears of flesh, and these men have entrails of stone.

Whom should we accuse? nobody and everybody, the imperfect times in which we live. It is always at its own risk and peril that the Utopia converts itself into an insurrection, and becomes an armed protest instead of a philosophic protest, a Pallas and no longer a Minerva. The Utopia which grows impatient and becomes a riot knows what awaits it, and it nearly always arrives too soon. In that case it resigns itself, and stoically accepts the catastrophe, in lieu of a triumph. It serves, without complaining, and almost exculpating them, those who deny it, and its magnanimity is to consent to abandonment. It is indomitable against obstacles, and gentle toward ingratitude. Is it ingratitude after all? yes, from the human

point of view; no, from the individual point of view. Progress is the fashion of man; the general life of the human race is called progress; and the collective step of the human race is also called progress. Progress marches; it makes the great celestial and human journey toward the celestial and divine; it has its halts where it rallies the straying flock; it has its stations where it meditates, in the presence of some splendid Canaan suddenly unveiling its horizon; it has its nights when it sleeps: and it is one of the poignant anxieties of the thinker to see the shadow on the human soul, and to feel in the darkness sleeping progress, without being able to awaken it.

*God is perhaps dead*, Gerard de Nerval said one day to the writer of these lines, confounding progress with God, and taking the interruption of the movement for the death of the Being. The man who despairs is wrong: progress infallibly reawakens, and we might say that it moves even when sleeping, for it has grown. When we see it upright again we find that it is taller. To be ever peaceful depends no more on progress than on the river; do not raise a bar, or throw in a rock, for the obstacle makes the water foam, and humanity boil. Hence come troubles, but after these troubles we notice that way has been made. Until order, which is nought else than universal peace, is established, until harmony and unity reign, progress will have revolutions for its halting-places. What, then, is progress? we have just said, the permanent life of the peoples. Now, it happens at times that the momentary life of individuals offers a resistance to the eternal life of the human race.

Let us avow without bitterness that the individual has his distinct interest, and can without felony stipulate for that interest and defend it; the present has its excusable amount of egotism, momentary right has its claims, and cannot be expected to sacrifice itself incessantly to the future. The generation which at the present moment is passing over the earth is not forced to abridge it, for the generations, its equals, after all, whose turn will come at a later date. "I exist," murmurs that some one, who is everybody. "I am young and in love, I am old and wish to rest, I am a father of a family, I work, I prosper, I do a good business, I have houses to let, I have money in the funds, I

am happy, I have wife and children, I like all that, I wish to live, and so leave us at peace." Hence at certain hours a profound coldness falls on the magnanimous vanguard of the human race. Utopia, moreover, we confess it, emerges from its radiant sphere in waging war. It, the truth of to-morrow, borrows its process, battle, from the falsehood of yesterday. It, the future, acts like the past; it, the pure idea, becomes an assault. It complicates its heroism with a violence for which it is but fair that it should answer; a violence of opportunity and expediency, contrary to principles, and for which it is fatally punished. The Utopia, when in a state of insurrection, combats with the old military code in its hand; it shoots spies, executes traitors, suppresses living beings, and hurls them into unknown darkness. It makes use of death, a serious thing. It seems that the Utopia no longer puts faith in the radiance, which is its irresistible and incorruptible strength. It strikes with the sword, but no sword is simple; every sword has two edges, and the man who wounds with one wounds himself with the other.

This reservation made, and made with all severity, it is impossible for us not to admire, whether they succeed or no, the glorious combatants of the future, the confessors of the Utopia. Even when they fail they are venerable, and it is perhaps in ill-success that they possess most majesty. Victory, when in accordance with progress, deserves the applause of the peoples, but an heroic defeat merits their tenderness. The one is magnificent, the other sublime. With us who prefer martyrdom to success, John Brown is greater than Washington, and Pisacane greater than Garibaldi. There should be somebody to take the part of the conquered, and people are unjust to these great essayers of the future when they fail. Revolutionists are accused of sowing terror, and every barricade appears an attack. Their theory is incriminated, their object is suspected, their afterthought is apprehended, and their conscience is denounced. They are reproached with elevating and erecting against the reigning social fact a pile of miseries, griefs, iniquities, and despair, and with pulling down in order to barricade themselves behind the ruins and combat. People shout to them, "You are unpaving Hades," and they might answer, "That is

the reason why our barricade is made of good intentions." The best thing is certainly the pacific solution; after all, let us allow, when people see the pavement, they think of the bear, and it is a good will by which society is alarmed. But it depends on society to save itself, and we appeal to its own good will. No violent remedy is necessary: study the evil amicably, and then cure it,—that is all we desire.

However this may be, those men, even when they have fallen, and especially then, are august, who at all points of the universe, with their eyes fixed on France, are struggling for the great work with the inflexible logic of the ideal; they give their life as a pure gift for progress, they accomplish the will of Providence, and perform a religious act. At the appointed hour, with as much disinterestedness as an actor who takes up his cue, they enter the tomb in obedience to the divine scenario, and they accept this hopeless combat and this stoical disappearance in order to lead to its splendid and superior universal consequences. The magnificent human movement irresistibly began on July 14. These soldiers are priests, and the French revolution is a deed of God. Moreover, there are—and it is proper to add this distinction to the distinctions already indicated in another chapter,—there are accepted insurrections which are called revolutions; and there are rejected revolutions which are called riots. An insurrection which breaks out is an idea which passes its examination in the presence of the people. If the people drops its black-ball, the idea is dry fruit, and the insurrection is a street-riot. Waging war at every appeal and at each time that the Utopia desires it is not the fact of the peoples; for nations have not always, and at all hours the temperament of heroes and martyrs. They are positive; *à priori* insurrection is repulsive to them, in the first place, because it frequently has a catastrophe for result, and, secondly, because it always has an abstraction as its starting-point.

For, and this is a grand fact, those who devote themselves do so for the ideal and the ideal alone. An insurrection is an enthusiasm, and enthusiasm may become a fury, whence comes an upraising of muskets. But every insurrection which aims at a government or a regime aims higher. Hence, for instance, we will dwell on the fact that what

the chiefs of the insurrection of 1832, and especially the young enthusiasts of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, combatted was not precisely Louis Philippe. The majority, speaking candidly, did justice to the qualities of this king who stood between monarchy and revolution, and not one of them hated him. But they attacked the younger branch of the right divine in Louis Philippe, as they had attacked the elder branch in Charles X., and what they wished to overthrow in overthrowing the monarchy in France was, as we have explained, the usurpation of man over man, and the privilege opposing right throughout the universe. Paris without a king has as its counterstroke the world without despots. They reasoned in this way, and though their object was doubtless remote, vague perhaps, and recoiling before the effort, it was grand.

So it is. And men sacrifice themselves for these visions, which are for the sacrificed nearly always illusions, but illusions with which the whole of human certainty is mingled. The insurgent poeticizes and gilds the insurrection, and men hurl themselves into these tragical things, intoxicating themselves upon what they are about to do. Who knows? perhaps they will succeed; they are the minority; they have against them an entire army; but they are defending the right natural law, the sovereignty of each over himself, which allows of no possible abdication, justice, and truth, and, if necessary, they die like the three hundred Spartans. They do not think of Don Quixote, but of Leonidas, and they go onward, and once the battle has begun they do not recoil, but dash forward, head downwards, having for hope an extraordinary victory, the revolution completed, progress restored to liberty, the aggrandizement of the human race, universal deliverance, and at the worst a Thermopylæ. These combats for progress frequently fail, and we have explained the cause. The mob is restive against the impulse of the Paladins; the heavy masses, the multitudes fragile on account of their very heaviness, fear adventures, and there is adventure in the ideal. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that these are interests which are no great friends of the ideal and the sentimental. Sometimes the stomach paralyzes the heart. The greatness and beauty of France are, that she does not grow so stout as other nations, and knots the rope round her hips with greater facility,

she is the first to wake and the last to fall asleep; she goes forward and seeks. The reason of this is because she is artistic.

The ideal is nought else than the culminating point of logic, in the same way as the beautiful is only the summit of the true. Artistic people are also consistent people; loving beauty is to see light. The result of this is, that the torch of Europe, that is to say of civilization, was first borne by Greece, who passed it to Italy, who passed it to France, *vitai lampada tradunt*. It is an admirable thing that the poesy of a people is the element of its progress, and the amount of civilization is measured by the amount of imagination. Still, a civilizing people must remain masculine; Corinth yes, but Sybaris no, for the man who grows effeminate is bastardized. A man must be neither dilettante nor virtuoso, but he should be artistic. In the matter of civilization, there must not be refinement, but sublimation, and on that condition the pattern of the ideal is given to the human race. The modern ideal has its type in art, and its means in science. It is by science that the august vision of the poet, the social beauty, will be realized, and Eden will be remade by A and B. At the point which civilization has reached exactitude is a necessary element of the splendid, and the artistic feeling is not only served but completed by the scientific organ; the dream must calculate. Art, which is the conqueror, ought to have science, which is the mover, as its base. The strength of the steed is an important factor, and the modern mind is the genius of Greece, having for vehicle the genius of India—Alexander mounted on an elephant. Races petrified in dogma, or demoralized by time, are unsuited to act as guides to civilization. Genuflection before the idol or the crown-piece ruins the muscle which moves and the will that goes. Hieratic or mercantile absorption reduces the radiance of a people, lowers its horizon by lowering its level, and withdraws from it that both human and divine intelligence of the universal object, which renders nations missionaries. Babylon has no ideal, nor has Carthage, while Athens and Rome have, and retain, even through all the nocturnal density of ages, a halo of civilization.

France is of the same quality, as a people, as Greece and Rome; she is Athenian through the beautiful, and Roman through her grand-



eur. Besides, she is good, and is more often than other nations in the humor for devotion and sacrifice. Still, this humor takes her and leaves her; and this is the great danger for those who run when she merely wishes to walk, or who walk when she wishes to halt. France has her relapses into materialism, and at seasons the ideas which obstruct this sublime brain have nothing that recalls French grandeur, and are of the dimensions of a Missouri or a South Carolina. What is to be done? the giantess plays the dwarf, and immense France feels a fancy for littleness. That is all. To this nothing can be said, for people like planets have the right to be eclipsed. And that is well, provided that light return and the eclipse does not degenerate into night. Dawn and resurrection are synonymous, and the reappearance of light is synonymous with the existence of the Ego. Let us state these facts calmly. Death on a barricade, or a tomb in exile, is an acceptable occasion for devotion, for the real name of devotion is disinterestedness. Let the abandoned be abandoned, let the exiles be exiled, and let us confine ourselves to imploring great nations not to recoil too far when they do recoil. Under the pretext of returning to reason, it is not necessary to go too far down the incline. Matter exists, the moment exists, interests exist, the stomach exists, but the stomach must not be the sole wisdom. Momentary life has its rights, we admit, but permanent life has them also. Alas! to have mounted does not prevent falling, and we see this in history more frequently than we wish; a nation is illustrious, it tastes of the ideal, then it bites into the mud and finds it good, and when we ask it why it abandons Socrates for Falstaff, it replies, Because I am fond of statesmen.

One word before returning to the barricade. A battle like the one which we are describing at this moment is only a convulsion for the ideal. Impeded progress is sickly, and has such tragic attacks of epilepsy. This malady of progress, civil war, we have met as we passed along, and it is one of the social phases, at once an act and an interlude of that drama whose pivot is a social condemnation, and whose veritable title is *Progress*. Progress! this cry, which we raise so frequently, is our entire thought, and at the point of our drama which we have reached, as the idea which it contains has still more

than one trial to undergo, we may be permitted, even if we do not raise the veil, to let its gleams pierce through clearly. The book which the reader has before him at this moment is, from one end to the other, in its entirety and its details, whatever the intermitances, exceptions, and shortcomings may be, the progress from evil to good, from injustice to justice, from falsehood to truth, from night to day, from appetite to conscience, from corruption to life, from bestiality to duty, from hell to heaven, and from nothingness to God. The starting-point is matter, the terminus the soul; the hydra at the commencement, the angel at the end.



## CHAPTER CCXLIV.

### THE HEROES.

SUDDENLY the drum beat the charge, and the attack was a hurricane. On the previous evening the barricade had been silently approached in the darkness as by a boa, but, at present, in broad daylight, within this gutted street, surprise was impossible; besides, the armed force was unmasked, the cannon had begun the roaring, and the troops rushed upon the barricade. Fury was now skill. A powerful column of line infantry, intersected at regular intervals by National Guards and dismounted Municipal Guards, and supported by heavy masses, that could be heard if not seen, debouched into the street at the double with drums beating, bugles braying, bayonets levelled, and sabres in front, and imperturbable under the shower of projectiles dashed straight at the barricade with all the weight of a bronze battering-ram. But the wall held out firmly, and the insurgents fired impetuously; the escaladed barricade displayed a flashing mane. The attack was so violent that it was in a moment inundated by assailants; but it shook off the soldiers as the lion does the dogs, and it was only covered with besiegers as the cliff is with foam to reappear a minute later scarped, black and formidable.

The columns, compelled to fall back, remained massed in the street, exposed but terrible, and answered the redoubt by a tremendous musketry-fire. Any one who has seen fireworks will remember the piece composed of a cross-fire of lightnings, which is called a bouquet. Imagine this bouquet, no

longer vertical but horizontal, and bearing at the end of each jet a bullet, slugs, or iron-balls, and scattering death. The barricade was beneath it. On either side was equal resolution: the bravery was almost barbarous, and was complicated by a species of heroic ferocity which began with self-sacrifice. It was the epoch when a National Guard fought like a Zouave. The troops desired an end, and the insurrection wished to contend. The acceptance of death in the height of youth and health converts intrepidity into a frenzy, and each man in this action had the grandeur of the last hour. The street was covered with corpses. The barricade had Marius at one of its ends and Enjolras at the other. Enjolras, who carried the whole barricade in his head, reserved and concealed himself: three soldiers fell under his loophole without even seeing him, while Marius displayed himself openly, and made himself a mark. More than once half his body rose above the barricade. There is no more violent prodigal than a miser who takes the bit between his teeth, and no man more startling in action than a dreamer. Marius was formidable and pensive, and was in action as in a dream. He looked like a firing ghost. The cartridges of the besieged were exhausted, but not their sarcasms; and they laughed in the tornado of the tomb in which they stood. Courfeyrac was bareheaded.

"What have you done with your hat?" Bossuet asked him, and Courfeyrac answered,—

"They carried it away at last with cannon-balls."

Or else they made haughty remarks.

"Can you understand," Feuilly exclaimed bitterly, "those men" (and he mentioned names, well known and even celebrated names that belonged to the old army) "who promised to join us and pledge their honor to aid us, and who are generals, and abandon us?"

And Combeferre restricted himself to replying with a grave smile,—

"They are people who observe the rules of honor as they do the stars, a long distance off."

The interior of the barricade was so sown with torn cartridges that it seemed as if there had been a snow storm. The assailants had the numbers and the insurgents the position. They were behind a wall, and crushed at point-blank range the soldiers who were stumbling over the dead and wounded. This

barricade built as it was, and admirably strengthened, was really one of those situations in which a handful of men holds a legion in check. Still, constantly recruited and growing beneath the shower of bullets, the column of attack inexorably approached, and now gradually, step by step, but certainly, contracted round the barricade.

The assaults succeeded each other, and the horror became constantly greater. Then there broke out on this pile of paving-stones, in this Rue de la Chanvrerie, a struggle worthy of the wall of Troy. These fallow, ragged, and exhausted men, who had not eaten for four-and-twenty hours, who had not slept, who had only a few rounds more to fire, who felt their empty pockets for cartridges—these men, nearly all wounded, with head or arm bound round with a blood-stained blackish rag, having holes in their coat from which the blood flew, scarce armed with bad guns and old rusty sabres, became Titans. The barricade was ten times approached, assaulted, escaladed, and never captured. To form an idea of the contest it would be necessary to imagine a heap of terrible courages set on fire, and that you are watching the flames. It was not a combat, but the interior of a furnace; mouths breathed flames there, and the faces were extraordinary. The human form seemed impossible there, the combatants flashed, and it was a formidable sight to see these salmanders of the medley flitting about in this red smoke. The successive and simultaneous scenes of this butchery are beyond our power to depict, for epic alone has the right to fill ten thousand verses with a battle. It might have been called that Inferno of Brahminism, the most formidable of the seventeen abystes, which the Veda calls the forest of swords. They fought foot to foot, body to body, with pistol-shots, sabre-cuts, and fists close by, at a distance, above, below, on all sides, from the roof the house, from the wine-shop, and even from the traps of the cellars into which some had slipped. The odds were sixty to one, and the frontage of Cornith hat demolished was hideous. The window, pock marked with grape-shot, had lost glass and frame, and was only a shapeless hole, tumultuously stopped up with paving-stones. Bossuet was killed, Feuilly was killed, Courfeyrac was killed, Joly was killed, Combeferre traversed by three bayonet stabs in the breas

at the moment when he was raising a wounded soldier, had only time to look up to heaven, and expired. Marius, still fighting, had received so many wounds, especially in the head, that his face disappeared in blood and looked as if it were covered by a red handkerchief. Enjolras alone was not wounded; when he had no weapon he held out his arm to the right or left, and an insurgent placed some instrument in his hand. He had only four broken sword-blades left, one more than Francis I. had at Marignano.

In our old poems of the Gesta, Esplandian attacks with a flaming falchion the Marquis Gèant Swantibore, who defends himself by storming the knight with towers which he uproots. Our old mural frescoes show us the two Dukes of Brittany and Bourbon armed for war and mounted, and approaching each other, axe in hand, masked with steel, shod with steel, gloved with steel, one caparisoned with ermine and the other draped in azure; Brittany with his lion between the two horns of his crown, and Bourbon with an enormous *fleur-de-lys* at his vizor. But, in order to be superb, it is not necessary to wear, like Yvon, the ducal morion, or to have in one hand a living flame like Esplandian; it is sufficient to lay down one's life for a conviction or a royal deed. This little simple soldier, yesterday a peasant of Bearne or the Limousin, who prowls about, cabbage-cutter by his side, round the nurse-maids in the Luxembourg, this young pale student bowed over an anatomical study or book, a fair-haired boy who shaves himself with a pair of scissors,—take them both, breathe duty into them, put them face to face in the Carrefour Boucherat or the Planche Mibray blind alley, and let one fight for his flag and the other combat for his ideal, and let them both imagine that they are contending for their country, and the struggle will be colossal; and the shadow cast by these two contending lads on the great epic field where humanity is struggling, will be equal to that thrown by Megarion, King of Lycia abounding in tigers, as he wrestles with the immense Ajax, the equal of the gods.

#### CHAPTER CCXLV.

FOOT TO FOOT.

WHEN there were no chiefs left but Enjolras and Marius at the two ends of the barri-

cade, the centre which had so long been supported by Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Feuilly, and Combeferre, yielded. The cannon, without making a practicable breach, had severely injured the centre of the redoubt, then a crest of the wall had disappeared under the balls and fallen down, and the fragments which had collected both inside and out had in the end formed two slopes, the outer one of which offered an inclined plane by which to attack. A final assault was attempted thus, and this assault was successful; the bristling mass of bayonets, hurled forward at a run, came up irresistibly, and the dense line of the attacking column appeared in the smoke at the top of the scarp. This time it was all over, and the band of insurgents defending the centre recoiled pell-mell.

Then the gloomy love of life was rekindled in some; covered by this forest of muskets, several did not wish to die. It is the moment when the spirit of self-preservation utters yells, and when the beast reappears in man. They were drawn up against the six-storied house at the back of the barricade, and this house might be their salvation. This house was barricaded, as it were walled up from top to bottom, but before the troops reached the interior of the redoubt, a door would have time to open and shut, as it would be life for these desperate men, for at the back of this house were streets, possible flight, and space. They began kicking and knocking at the door, while calling, crying, imploring, and clasping their hands. But no one opened. The dead head looked down on them from the third-floor window. But Marius and Enjolras, and seven or eight men who rallied round them, had rushed forward to protect them. Enjolras shouted to the soldiers, Do not advance, and as an officer declined to obey he killed the officer. He was in the inner yard of the redoubt, close to Corinth, with his sword in one hand and carbine in the other, holding open the door of the wine shop, which he barred against the assailants. He shouted to the desperate men. "There is only one door open, and it is this one," and covering them with his person, and alone facing a battalion, he made them pass behind him. All rushed in, and Enjolras, whirling his musket round his head, drove back the bayonets and entered the last, and there was a frightful moment, during which the troops tried to enter and the insurgents to

bar the door. The latter was closed with such violence that the five fingers of a soldier who had caught hold of a door-post were cut off clean, and remained in the crevice. Marius remained outside; a bullet broke his collar-bone, and he felt himself fainting and falling. At this moment, when his eyes were already closed, he felt the shock of a powerful hand seizing him, and his fainting-fit scarce left him time for this thought, blended with the supreme recollection of Cosette, "I am made prisoner and shall be shot."

Enjolras, not seeing Marius among those who had sought shelter in the house, had the same idea, but they had reached that moment when each could only think of his own death. Enjolras put the bar on the door, bolted and locked it, while the soldiers beat it with musket-butts, and the sappers attacked it with their axes outside. The assailants were grouped round this door, and the siege of the wine-shop now begun. The soldiers, let us add, were full of fury; the death of the sergeant of artillery had irritated them, and then, more mournful still, during the few hours that preceded the attack a whisper ran along the ranks that the insurgents were mutilating their prisoners, and that there was the headless body of a soldier in the cellar. This species of fatal rumor is the general accompaniment of civil wars, and it was a false report of the same nature which at a later date produced the catastrophe of the Rue Transnonain. When the door was secured Enjolras said to the others,—

"Let us all sell our lives dearly."

Then he went up to the table on which Mabeuf and Gavroche were lying; under the black cloth two forms could be seen straight and livid, one tall, and the other short, and the two faces were vaguely designed under the cold folds of the winding-sheet. A hand emerged from under it, and hung toward the ground; it was the old man. Enjolras bent down and kissed this venerable hand, in the same way as he had done the forehead on the previous evening. They were the only two kisses he had ever given in his life.

Let us abridge. The barricade had resisted like a gate of Thebes, and the wine-shop resisted like a house of Saragossa. Such resistances are violent, and there is no quarter, and a flag of truce is impossible; people are willing to die provided that they can kill. When Suchet says "capitulate," Palafoux

answers, "After the war with cannon the war with the knife." Nothing was wanting in the attack on the Hucheloup wine-shop; neither paving-stone showering from the window and roof on the assailants, and exasperating the troops by the frightful damage they committed, nor shots from the attics and cellar, nor the fury of the attack, nor the rage of the defence, nor, finally, when the door gave way, the frenzied mania of extermination. When the assailants rushed into the wine-shop, their feet entangled in the panels of the broken door which lay on the ground, they did not find a single combatant. The winding staircase, cut away with axes, lay in the middle of the ground-floor room, a few wounded men were on the point of dying, all who were not killed were on the first floor, and a terrific fire was discharged thence through the hole in the ceiling which had been the entrance to the restaurant. These were the last cartridges, and when they were expended and nobody had any powder or balls left, each man took up two of the bottles reserved by Enjolras, and defended the stairs with these frightfully fragile weapons. They were bottles of aquafortis. We describe the gloomy things of carnage exactly as they are: the besieged makes a weapon of every thing. Greek fire did not dishonor Archimedes, boiling pitch did not dishonor Bayard; every war is a horror, and there is no choice. The musketry-fire of the assailants, though impeded and discharged from below, was murderous; and the brink of the whole was soon lined with dead heads, whence dipped long red and steaming jets. The noise was indescribable, and a compressed burning smoke almost threw night over the combat. Words fail to describe horror when it has reached this stage. There were no men in this now infernal struggle, they were no longer giants contending against Titans. It resembled Milton and Dante more than Homer, for demons attacked and spectres resisted. It was a monster heroism.

## CHAPTER CCXLVI.

ORESTES SOBER AND PYLADES DRUNK.

At length, by employing the skeleton of the staircase, by climbing up the walls, clinging to the ceiling and killing on the very edge of the trap the last who resisted, some twenty assailants, soldiers, National and Mu-

nicipal Guards, mostly disfigured by wounds in the face received in this formidable ascent, blinded by blood, furious and savage, burst into the first-floor room. There was only one man standing there—Enjolras; without cartridges or sword, he only held in his hand the barrel of his carbine, whose butt he had broken on the heads of those who entered. He had placed the billiard-table between himself and his assailants, he had fallen back to the end of the room, and there with flashing eye and head erect, holding the piece of a weapon in his hand, he was still sufficiently alarming for a space to be found round him. A cry was raised,—

"It is the chief; it was he who killed the artilleryman; as he has placed himself there, we will let him remain there. Shoot him on the spot."

"Shoot me, Enjolras said.

And, throwing away his weapon and folding his arms, he offered his chest. The boldness of dying bravely always moves men. So soon as Enjolras folded his arms, accepting the end, the din of the struggle ceased in the room, and the chaos was suddenly appeased in a species of sepulchral solemnity. It seemed as if the menacing majesty of Enjolras, disarmed and motionless, produced an effect on the tumult, and that merely by the authority of his tranquil glance, this young man, who alone was unwounded, superb, blood-stained, charming, and indifferent as an invulnerable, constrained this sinister mob to kill him respectfully. His beauty, heightened at this moment by his haughtiness, was dazzling, and as if he could be no more fatigued than wounded after the frightful four-and-twenty hours which had elapsed, he was fresh and rosy. It was to him that the witness referred when he said at a later date before the court-martial, "There was an insurgent whom I heard called Apollo." A national Guard who aimed at Enjolras lowered his musket, saying, "I feel as if I were going to kill a flower." Twelve men formed into a platoon in the corner opposite to the one in which Enjolras stood, and got their muskets ready in silence. Then a sergeant shouted, "Present."

An officer interposed.

"Wait a minute."

And, addressing Enjolras,—

"Do you wish to have your eyes bandaged?"

"No."

"It was really you who killed the sergeant of artillery?"

"Yes."

Grantaire had been awake for some minutes past. Grantaire, it will be remembered, had been sleeping since the past evening in the upper room with his head lying on a table. He realized in all its energy the old metaphor, dead drunk. The hideous philter of absinthe, stout, and alcohol had thrown him into a lethargic state, and, as his table was small, and of no use at the barricade, they had left it him. He was still in the same posture, with his chest upon the table, his head reeling on his arms, and surrounded by glasses and bottles. He was sleeping the deadly sleep of the hybernating bear, or the filled leech. Nothing had roused him, neither the platoon fire, nor the cannon-balls, nor the canister which penetrated through the window into the room where he was, nor the prodigious noise of the assault. Still he at times responded to the cannon by a snore. He seemed to be waiting for a bullet to save him the trouble of waking; several corpses lay around him, and, at the first glance, nothing distinguished him from these deep sleepers of death.

Noise does not wake a drunkard, but silence arouses him, and this peculiarity has been more than once observed. The fall of anything near him increased Grantaire's lethargy, and noise lulled him. The species of halt which the tumult made before Enjolras was a shock for this heavy sleep, and it is the effect of a galloping coach which stops short. Grantaire started up, stretched out his arms, rubbed his eyes, looked, yawned, and understood. Intoxication wearing off resembles a curtain that is rent, and a man sees at once, and at a single glance, all that is concealed. Everything offers itself suddenly to the memory, and the drunkard, who knows nothing of what has happened during the last twenty-four hours, has scarce opened his eyes ere he understands it all. Ideas return with a sudden lucidity; the species of suds that blinded the brain is dispersed, and makes way for a clear and distinctive apprehension of the reality.

Concealed, as he was, in a corner, and sheltered, so to speak, by the billiard-table, the soldiers, who had their eyes fixed on Enjolras, had not even perceived Grantaire, and

the sergeant was preparing to repeat the order to fire when all at once they heard a powerful voice crying at their side,—

“Long live the Republic! I belong to it.”

Grantaire had risen; and the immense gleam of all the combat which he had missed appeared in the flashing glance of the transfigured drunkard. He repeated, “Long live the Republic!” crossed the room with a firm step, and placed himself before the muskets by Enjolras’ side.

“Kill us both at once,” he said.

And turning gently to Enjolras, he asked him,—

“Do you permit it?”

Enjolras pressed his hand with a smile, and this smile had not passed away ere the detonation took place. Enjolras, traversed by eight bullets, remained leaning against the wall, as if nailed to it; he merely hung his head; Grantaire was lying stark dead at his feet. A few minutes later the soldiers dislodged the last insurgents who had taken refuge at the top of the house, and were firing through a partition in the garret. They fought desperately, and threw bodies out of windows, some still alive. Two voltigeurs, who were trying to raise the smashed omnibus, were killed by two shots from the attics; a man in a blouse rushed out of them, with a bayonet thrust in his stomach, and lay on the ground expiring. A private and insurgent slipped together down the tiles of the roof, and as they would not loosen their hold fell into the street, holding each other in a ferocious embrace. There was a similar struggle in the cellar; cries, shots and a fierce clashing; then a silence. The barricade was captured, and the soldiers began searching the adjacent houses and pursuing the fugitives.

## CHAPTER CCXLVII.

### PRISONER!

MARIUS was really a prisoner, prisoner to Jean Valjean; the hand which had clutched him behind at the moment when he was falling, and of which he felt the pressure as he lost his senses, was Jean Valjean’s.

Jean Valjean had taken no other part in the struggle than that of exposing himself. Had it not been for him, in the supreme moment of agony no one would have thought

of the wounded. Thanks to him, who was everywhere present in the carnage like a Providence, those who fell were picked up, carried to the ground-floor room, and had their wounds dressed, and in the intervals he repaired the barricade, but nothing that could resemble a blow, an attack, or even personal defence, could be seen with him, and he kept quiet and succored. However, he had only a few scratches; and the bullets had no billet for him. If suicide formed part of what he dreamed of when he came to this sepulchre, he had not been successful, but we doubt whether he thought of suicide, which is an irreligious act. Jean Valjean did not appear to see Marius in the thick of the combat, but in truth he did not take his eyes off him. When a bullet laid Marius low Jean Valjean leaped upon him with the agility of a tiger, dashed upon him as on a prey, and carried him off.

The whirlwind of the attack was at this moment so violently concentrated on Enjolras and the door of the wine-shop that no one saw Jean Valjean, supporting the fainting Marius in his arms, across the unpaved ground of the barricade, and disappear round the corner of Corinth. Our readers will remember this corner, which formed a sort of cape in the street, and protected a few square feet of ground from bullets and grape-shot, and from glances as well. There is thus at times in fires a room which does not burn, and in the most raging seas, beyond a promontory, or at the end of a reef, a little quiet nook. It was in this corner of the inner trapeze of the barricade that Eponine drew her last breath. Here Jean Valjean stopped, let Marius slip to the ground, leant against a wall, and looked around him.

The situation was frightful; for the instant, for two or three minutes perhaps, this piece of wall was a shelter, but how to get out of this massacre? He recalled the agony he had felt in the Rue Polonceau, eight years previously, and in what way he had succeeded in escaping; it was difficult then, but now it was impossible. He had in front of him that implacable and silent six-storied house, which only seemed inhabited by the dead man leaning out of his window; he had on his right the low barricade which closed the Petite Truanderie; to climb over this obstacle appeared easy, but a row of bayonet-points could be seen over the crest of the barricade;

they were line troops posted beyond the barricade and on the watch. It was evident that crossing the barricade was seeking a platoon fire, and that any head which appeared above the wall of paving-stones would serve as a mark for sixty muskets. He had on his left the battle-field, and death was behind the corner of the wall.

What was he to do? a bird alone could have escaped from this place. And he must decide at once, find an expedient, and make up his mind. They were fighting a few paces from him, but fortunately all were obstinately engaged at one point, the wine-shop door, but if a single soldier had the idea of turning the house or attacking it on the flank all would be over. Jean Valjean looked at the house opposite to him, he looked at the barricade by his side, and then looked on the ground, with the violence of supreme extremity, wildly, and as if he would have liked to dig a hole with his eyes. By force of looking, something vaguely discernible in such an agony was designed, and assumed a shape at his feet, as if the eyes had the power to produce the thing demanded. He perceived a few paces from him, at the foot of the small barricade so pitilessly guarded and watched from without, and beneath a pile of paving-stones, which almost concealed it, an iron grating, laid flat and flush with the ground. This grating made of strong cross bars was about two feet square, and the framework of paving-stones which supported it had been torn out, and it was as it were dismounted. Through the bars a glimpse could be caught of an obscure opening, something like a chimney-pot or the cylinder of a cistern. Jean Valjean dashed up, and his old skill in escapes rose to his brain like a beam of light. To remove the paving-stones, tear up the grating, take Marius, who was inert as a dead body, on his shoulders, descend with this burden on his loins, helping himself with his elbows and knees, into this sort of well which was fortunately of no great depth, to let the grating fall again over his head, to set foot on a paved surface, about ten feet below the earth, all this was executed like something done in delirium, with a giant's strength and the rapidity of an eagle; this occupied but a few minutes. Jean Valjean found himself with the still fainting Marius in a sort of long subterranean corridor, where there was profound peace, absolute silence,

and night. The impression which he had formerly felt in falling out of the street into the convent recurred to him, still what he now carried was not Cosette, but Marius.

He had scarce heard above his head like a vague murmur the formidable tumult of the wine-shop being taken by assault.

## CHAPTER CCXLVIII.

### THE EARTH IMPOVERISHED BY THE SEA.

PARIS casts twenty-five millions of francs annually into the sea, and we assert this without any metaphor. How so, and in what way? by day and night. For what object? for no object. With what thought? without thinking. What to do? nothing. By means of what organ? its intestines. What are its intestines? its sewers. Twenty-five millions are the most moderate of the approximative amounts given by the estimates of modern science. Science, after groping for a long time, knows now that the most fertilizing and effective of manures is human manure. The Chinese, let us say it to our shame, knew this before we did; not a Chinese peasant—it is Ekeberg who states the fact—who goes to the city, but brings at either end of his bamboo a bucket full of what we call filth. Thanks to the human manure, the soil in China is still as youthful as in the days of Abraham, and Chinese wheat yields just one hundred and twenty fold the sowing. There is no guano comparable in fertility to the detritus of a capital, and a large city is the most important of dungmixons. To employ the town in manuring the plain would be certain success, for if gold be dross, on the other hand our dross is gold.

What is done with this golden dung? it is swept into the gulf. We send at a great expense fleets of ships to collect at the southern pole the guano of petrels and penguins, and cast into the sea the incalculable element of wealth which we have under our hand. All the human and animal manure which the world loses, if returned to the land instead of being thrown into the sea, would suffice to nourish the world. Do you know what those piles of ordure are, collected at the corners of streets, those carts of mud carried off at night from the streets, the frightful barrels of the night-man, and the fetid streams of subterranean mud which the

pavement conceals from you? All this is a flowering field, it is green grass, it is mint and thyme and sage, it is game, it is cattle, it is the satisfied lowing of heavy kine at night, it is perfumed hay, it is gilded wheat, it is bread on your table, it is warm blood in your veins, it is health, it is joy, it is life. So desires that mysterious creation, which is transformation on earth, and transfiguration in heaven: restore this to the great crucible, and your abundance will issue from it, for the nutrition of the plains produces the nourishment of men. You are at liberty to lose this wealth and consider me ridiculous in the bargain; that would be the masterpiece of your ignorance. Statistics have calculated that France alone pours every year into the Atlantic a sum of half a milliard. Note this; with these five hundred millions one quarter of the expenses of the budget would be paid. The cleverness of man is so great that he prefers to get rid of these five hundred millions in the gutter. The very substance of the people is borne away, here drop by drop, and there in streams, by the wretched vomiting of our sewers into the rivers, and the gigantic vomiting of our rivers into ocean. Each eructation of our drains costs us one thousand francs and this has two results: the earth impoverished and the water poisoned; hunger issuing from the furrow and illness from the river. It is notorious that at this very hour the Thames poisons London! and as regards Paris, it has been found necessary to remove most of the mouths of the sewers down the river below the last bridge.

A double tubular apparatus supplied with valves and floodgates, a system of elementary drainage as simple as the human lungs, and which is already in full work in several English parishes, would suffice to bring into our towns the pure water of the fields and send to the fields the rich water of the towns, and this easy ebb and flow, the most simple in the world, would retain among us the five hundred millions thrown away. But people are thinking of other things. The present process does mischief while meaning well. The intention is good, but the result is sorrowful; they believe they are draining the city, while they are destroying the population. A sewer is a misunderstanding, and when drainage, with its double functions, restoring what it takes, is everywhere substituted for the

sewer, that simple and impoverishing washing, and is also combined with the data of a new social economy, the produce of the soil will be increased tenfold, and the problem of misery will be singularly attenuated. Add the suppression of parasitisms, and it will be solved. In the meanwhile the public wealth goes to the river, and a sinking takes place, sinking is the right word, for Europe is being ruined in this way by exhaustion. As for France, we have mentioned the figures. Now, as Paris contains one twenty-fifth of the whole French population, and the Parisian guano is the richest of all, we are beneath the truth when we estimate at twenty-five millions the share of Paris in the half-milliard which France annually refuses. These twenty-five millions, employed in assistance and enjoyment, would double the splendor of Paris, and the city expends them in sewers. So that we may say, the great prodigality of Paris, its marvellous fête, its Folie Beaujon, its orgie, its lavishing of gold, its luxury, splendor, and magnificence, is its sewerage. It is in this way that in the blindness of a bad political economy, people allow the comfort of all to be drowned and wasted in the water; there ought to be St. Cloud nets to catch the public fortunes.

Economically regarded, the fact may be resumed thus; Paris is a Danaë's cask. Paris, that model city, that pattern of well-conducted capitals, of which every people strive to have a copy, that metropolis of the ideal, that august home of initiative, impulse, and experiment, that centre and gathering-place of minds, that nation city, that beehive of the future, that marvellous composite of Babylon and Corinth, would make a peasant of Fo-Kian shrug his shoulders, from our present point of view. Imitate Paris, and you will ruin yourself; moreover, Paris imitates itself particularly in this immemorial and insensate squandering. These surprising follies are not new; it is no youthful nonsense. The ancients acted like the moderns. "The drains of Rome, says Liebig, "absorbed the entire welfare of the Roman peasant. When the Campagna of Rome was ruined by the Roman drains, Rome exhausted Italy, and when it had placed Italy in its cloaca, it poured into it Sicily, and then Sardinia, and then Africa. The drains of Rome swallowed up the world, and this cloaca offered its tunnels to the city and to the world.



*Urbi et orbi.* Eternal city and unfathomable drain.

For these things as for others, Rome gives the example, and this example Paris follows with all the folly peculiar to witty cities. For the requirements of the operation which we have been explaining, Paris has beneath it another Paris, a Paris of sewers, which has its streets, squares, lanes, arteries, and circulation, which is mud, with the human forces at least. For nothing must be flattered, not even a great people; where there is every thing, there is ignominy by the side of sublimity, and if Paris contain Athens, the city of light, Tyre, the city of power, Sparta, the city of virtue, Nineveh, the city of prodigies, it also contains Lutetia, the city of mud. Moreover, the stamp of its power is there too, and the Titanic sewer of Paris realizes among monuments the strange ideal realized in humanity by a few men like Machiavelli, Bacon, and Mirabeau; the grand abject. The sub-soil of Paris, if the eye could pierce the surface, would offer the aspect of a gigantic madrepore; a sponge has not more passages, and holes than the piece of ground, six leagues in circumference, upon which the old great city rests. Without alluding to the catacombs, which are a separate cellar, without speaking of the inextricable net of gas-pipes, without referring to the vast tubular system for the distribution of running-water, the drains alone form on either bank of the river a prodigious dark ramification, a labyrinth which has its incline for its clue. In the damp mist of this labyrinth is seen the rat, which seems the produce of the accouchement of Paris.

## CHAPTER CCXLIX.

### THE OLD HISTORY OF THE SEWER.

IF we imagine Paris removed like a cover, the subterranean net work of drains regarded from a bird's-eye view, would represent on either bank a sort of large branch grafted upon the river. On the right bank the encircling sewer will be the trunk of this branch, the secondary tubes the branches, and the blind alleys the twigs. This figure is only summary and half correct, as the right angle, which is the usual angle in subterranean ramifications of this nature, is very rare in vegetation. Our readers will

form a better likeness of this strange geometric plan by supposing that they see lying on a bed of darkness some strange Oriental alphabet as confused as a thicket, and whose shapeless letters are welded to each other in an apparent confusion, and as if accidentally, here by their angles and there by their ends. The sewers and drains played a great part in the middle ages, under the Lower Empire and in the old last. Plague sprang from them and despots died of it. The multitudes regarded almost with a religious awe these beds of corruption, these monstrous cradles of death. The vermin-ditch at Benares is not more fearful than the Lion's den at Babylon. Tiglath-Pileser, according to the rabbinical books, swore by the sink of Nineveh. It was from the drain of Munster that John of Leyden produced his false moon, and it was from the cesspool-well of Kekhscheb, that his Oriental Menœchmus, Mokannah, the veiled prophet of Korassan, brought his false sun.

The history of men is reflected in the history of the sewers, and the Gemoniæ narrated the story of Rome. The drain of Paris is an old formidable thing, it has been a sepulchre, and it has been an asylum. Crime, intellect, and social protest, liberty of conscience, thought, robbery, all that human laws pursue or have pursued, have concealed themselves in this den, the Maillotins in the fourteenth century, the cloak-stealers in the fifteenth, the Huguenots in the sixteenth, the illuminés of Morin in the seventeenth, and the Chauffeurs in the eighteenth. One hundred years ago the nocturnal dagger issued from it, and the rogue in danger glided into it; the wood had the cave and Paris had the drain. The Truanderie, that Gallic *picareserie*, accepted the drain as an annex of the Court Miracles, and at night, cunning and ferocious, entered beneath the Maubûée vomitory as into an alcove. It was very simple that those who had for their place of daily toil the Vide-Gousset lane, or the Rue Coupe-Gorge, should have for their nightly abode the Ponceau of the Chemin-Vert or the Hurepoix cagnard. Hence comes a swarm of recollections, all sorts of phantoms haunt these long solitary corridors, on all sides are putridity and miasma, and here and there is a trap through which Villon inside converses with Rabelais outside.

The drain in old Paris is the meeting-place

of all exhaustions and of all experiments; political economy sees there a detritus, and social philosophy a residuum. The drain is the conscience of the city, and everything converges and is confronted there. In this livid spot there is darkness, but there are no secrets. Each thing has its true form, or at least its definitive form. The pile of ordure has this in its favor, that it tells no falsehood, and simplicity has taken refuge there. Basile's mask is found there, but you see the pasteboard, the threads, the inside and out, and it is marked with honest filth. Scapin's false nose is lying close by. All the uncleannesses of civilization, where no longer of service, fall into this pit of truth; they are swallowed up, but display themselves in it. This pell-mell it a confession; there no false appearance nor any plastering is possible, order takes off its shirt, there is an absolute nudity, a rout of illusions and mirage, and there nothing but what is assuming the gloomy face of what is finishing. Reality and disappearance. There a bottle heel confessed intoxication, and a basket-handle talks about domesticity; there, the apple core which has literary opinions becomes once again the apple core, the effigy on the double sou grows frankly vert-de-grised, the saliva of Caiphas meets the vomit of Falstaff, the louis-d'or which comes from the gambling-hell dashes against the nail whence hangs the end of the suicide's rope, a livid foetus rolls along wrapped in spangles, which danced last Shrove Tuesday at the opera, a wig which had judged men wallows by the side of a rottenness, which was Margoton's petticoat: it is more than fraternity, it is the extremest familiarity. All that painted itself is bedaubed, and the last veil is torn away. The drain is a cynic and says everything. This sincerity of uncleanness pleases us and reposes the mind. When a man has spent his time upon the earth in undergoing the great airs assumed by state reasons, the oath, political wisdom, human justice, professional probity, the austerities of the situation, and incorruptible robes, it relieves him to enter a drain and see there the mud which becomes it.

It is instructive at the same time, for, as we said just now, history passes through the drain. St. Bartholomew filters there drop by drop through the paving-stones, and great public assassinations, political and religious butcheries, traverse this subterranean

way of civilization, and thrust their corpses into it. For the eye of the dreamer all historical murderers are there, in the hideous gloom, on their knees, with a bit of their winding-sheet for an apron, and mournfully sponging their task. Louis XI. is there with Tristan, Francis I. is there with Duprat, Charles IX. is there with his mother, Richelieu is there with Louis XIII., Louvois is there, Letellier is there, Herbert and Mailard are there, scratching the stones, and trying to efface the trace of their deeds. The brooms of these spectres can be heard under these vaults, and the enormous fetidness of social catastrophes is breathed there. You see in corners red flashes, and a terrible water flows there in which blood-stained hands have been washed.

The social observer should enter these shadows, for they form part of his laboratory. Philosophy is the microscope of thought; everything strives to fly from it, but nothing escapes it. Tergiversation is useless, for what side of himself does a man show in tergiversation? his ashamed side. Philosophy pursues evil with its upright glance and does not allow it to escape into nothingness. It recognizes everything in the effacement of disappearing things, and in the diminution of vanishing things. It reconstructs the purple after the rags, and the women after the tatters. With the sewer it re-makes the town; with the mud it re-makes manners. It judges from the potsherds whether it were an amphora or an earthenware jar. It recognizes by a nail mark on a parchment the difference which separates the Jewry of the Juden-gasse from the Jewry of the Ghetto. It finds again in what is left what has been the good, the bad, the false, the truth, the patch of blood in the palace, the ink-stain of the cavern, the fallow drop of the brothel, trials undergone, temptations welcome, orgies vomited up, the wrinkle which characters have formed in abasing themselves the traces of prostitution in the souls which their coarseness rendered capable of it, and under the vest of the porters of Rome the elbow nudge of Messalina.

## CHAPTER CCL.

BRUNESAU.

THE drain of Paris in the middle ages was legendary. In the sixteenth century Henry Hugo. Vol. III.—9

II. attempted soundings which failed, and not a hundred years ago, as Mercier testifies, the sewer was abandoned to itself, and became what it could. Such was that ancient Paris, handed over to quarrels, indecisions, and groping. It was for a long time thus stupid, and at a later period, '89, showed how cities acquire sense. But in the good old times the capital had but little head; it did not know how to transact its business either morally or materially, and could no more sweep away its ordure than its abuses. Everything was an obstacle, everything raised a question. The drain, for instance, was refractory to any itinerary, and people could no more get on under the city than they did in it; above everything was unintelligible, below inextricable; beneath the confusion of tongues was the confusion of cellars, and Dædalus was mixed up with Babel. At times the drain of Paris thought proper to overflow, as if this misunderstood Nile had suddenly fallen into a passion. There were, infamous to relate, inundations of the drain. At moments this stomach of civilization digested badly, the sewer flowed back into the throat of the city, and Paris had the after-taste of its ordure. These resemblances of the drain to remorse had some good about them, for they were warnings, very badly taken, however; for the city was indignant that its mud should have so much boldness, and did not admit that the ordure should return. Get rid of it better.

The inundation of 1802 is in the memory of Parisians of eighty years of age. The mud spread across the Place des Victoires, on which is the statue of Louis XIV.; it entered Rue St. Honoré by the two mouths of the drain of the Champs Elysées, Rue St. Florentin by the St. Florentin drain, Rue Pierre à Poisson by the drain of the Sonnerie, Rue Popincourt by the Chemin-Vert drain, and Rue de la Roquette by the Rue de Lappe drain; it covered the level of the Rue des Champs Elysées, to a height of fourteen inches, and in the south, owing to the vomitory of the Seine performing its duties contrariwise, it entered Rue Mazarine, Rue de l'Echaudé, and Rue du Marais, where it stopped after running on a hundred and twenty yards, just a few yards from the house which Racine had inhabited, respecting, in the seventeenth century, the poet more than the king. It reached its maximum depth in

the Rue St. Pierre, where it rose three feet above the gutter, and its maximum extent in the Rue St. Sabine, where it extended over a length of two hundred and fifty yards.

At the beginning of the present century the drain of Paris was still a mysterious spot. Mud can never be well famed, but here the ill reputation extended almost to terror. Paris knew confusedly that it had beneath it a gruesome cave; people talked about it as of that monstrous cesspool of Thebes, in which centipedes fifteen feet in length swarmed, and which could have served as a bathing-place for Behemoth. The heavy sewers-men's boots never ventured beyond certain known points. It was still very close to the time when the scavengers' carts, from the top of which St. Foix fraternized with the Marquis de Créquy, were simply unloaded into the drain. As for the cleansing, the duty was intrusted to the showers, which choked up rather than swept away. Rome allowed some poetry to her cloaca, and called it the Gemoniæ, but Paris insulted its own, and called it the stench-hole. Science and superstition were agreed as to the horror, and the stench-hole was quite as repugnant to Hygiene as to the legend. The hobgoblin saw light under the fetid arches of the Mouf-fetard drain: the corpses of the Marmousets were thrown into the Barillerie drain: Fagot attributed the malignant fever of 1685 to the great opening of the Marias drain, which remained yawning until 1833 in the Rue St. Louis, nearly opposite the sign of the Messages Gallant. The mouth of the drain in the Rue de la Mortellerie was celebrated for the pestilences which issued from it; with its iron-pointed grating that resembled a row of teeth it yawned in this fatal street like the throat of a dragon breathing hell on mankind. The popular imagination seasoned the gloomy Parisian sewer with some hideous mixture of infinitude: the drain was bottomless, the drain was a Barathrum, and the idea of exploring these leprous regions never even occurred to the police. Who would have dared to cast a sound into this darkness, and go on a journey of discovery in this abyss? It was frightful, and yet some one presented himself at last, and the cloaca had its Christopher Columbus.

One day, in 1805, during one of the rare apparitions which the emperor made in Paris, the minister of the interior attended at his

master's *petit lever*. In the courtyard could be heard the clanging sabres of all the extraordinary soldiers of the great republic and the great empire; there was a swarm of heroes at Napoleon's gates; men of the Rhine, the Schelde, the Adage, and the Nile; comrades of Joubert, of Desaix, of Marceau, Hoche, and Kleber, aeronauts of Fleures, grenadiers of Mayence, pontoons of Genoa, hussars whom the Pyramids had gazed at, artillerymen who had been bespattered by Junot's cannon-balls, cuirassiers who had taken by assault the fleet entered in the Zuyderzee; some had followed Bonaparte upon the bridge of Lodi, others had accompanied Murat to the trenches of Mantua, while others had outstripped Lannes in the hollow way of Montebello. The whole army of that day was in the court of the Tuileries, represented by a squadron or a company, and guarding the resting Napoleon; and it was the splendid period when the great army had Marengo behind it and Austerlitz before it. "Sire," said the minister of the interior to Napoleon, "I have seen to-day the most intrepid man of your empire." "Who is the man?" the emperor asked sharply, "and what has he done?" "He wishes to do something, sire." "What is it?" "To visit the drains of Paris." This man existed, and his name was Bruneseau.

The visit took place, and was a formidable campaign; a nocturnal battle against asphyxia and plague. It was at the same time a voyage of discovery, and one of the survivors of the exploration, an intelligent workman, very young at that time, used to recount a few years ago the curious details which Bruneseau thought it right to omit in his report to the prefect of police, as unworthy of the administrative style. Disinfecting processes were very rudimentary at that day, and Bruneseau had scarce passed the first articulations of the subterranean network ere eight workmen out of twenty refused to go further. The operation was complicated, for the visit entailed cleansing: it was, therefore, requisite to cleanse and at the same time take measurements; note the water entrances, count the traps and mouths, detail the branches, indicate the currents, recognize the respective dimensions of the different basins, sound the small drains grafted on the main sewer, measure the height under the keystone of each passage and the width

both at the bottom and the top, in order to arrange the amount of water employed in flushing. They advanced with difficulty, and it was not rare for the ladders to sink into three feet of mud. The lanterns would scarce burn in the mephitic atmosphere, and from time to time a sewer-man was carried away in a fainting state. At certain spots there was a precipice; the soil had given way, the stones were swallowed up, and the drain was converted into a lost well; nothing solid could be found, and they had great difficulty in dragging out a man who suddenly disappeared. By the advice of Fourcroy large cages filled with tow saturated with resin were set fire to at regular distances. The wall was covered at spots with shapeless fungi which might have been called tumors, and the stone itself seemed ill in this unbreathable medium.

Bruneseau, in his exploration, proceeded down hill. At the point where the two water-pipes of the Grand Hurleur separate he deciphered on a projecting stone the date 1550; this stone indicated the limit where Philibert Delorme, instructed by Henri II. to inspect the subways of Paris, stopped. This stone was the mark of the sixteenth century in the drain, and Bruneseau found the handiwork of the seventeenth in the conduit du Ponceau and that of the Rue Vieille du Temple, which were arched between 1600 and 1650, and the mark of the eighteenth in the west section of the collecting canal, enclosed and arched in 1740. These two arches, especially the younger one, that of 1740, were more decrepit and cracked than the masonry of the begirding drain, which dated from 1412, the period when the Menilmontant stream was raised to the dignity of the grand drain of Paris, a promotion analogous to that of a peasant who became first valet to the king; something like Grand Jean transformed into Lebel.

They fancied they recognized here and there, especially under the Palace of Justices, the form of old dungeons formed in the drain itself, hideous *in pace*. An iron collar hung in one of these cells, and they were all bricked up. A few of the things found were peculiar; among others the skeleton of an ourang-outang, which disappeared from the Jardin des Plantes in 1800, a disappearance probably connected with the famous and incontestable apparition of the fiend in the Rue

des Bernardins in the last year of the eighteenth century. The poor animal eventually drowned itself in the drain. Under the long vaulted passage leading to the Arche Marion a rag-picker's *hotte* in a perfect state of preservation caused the admiration of connoisseurs. Everywhere the mud, which the sewer-men had come to handle intrepidly, abounded in precious objects; gold and silver, jewelry, precious stones, and coin. A giant who had filtered this cloaca would have found in his sieve the wealth of centuries. At the point where the two branches of the Rue du Temple and the Rue St. Avoye divide, a singular copper Huguenot medal was picked up, bearing on one side a pig wearing a cardinal's hat, and on the other a wolf with the tiara on its head.

The most surprising discovery was at the entrance of the Grand Drain. This entrance had been formerly closed by a gate, of which only the hinges now remained. From one of these hinges hung a filthy shapeless rag, which doubtless caught there as it passed, floated in the shadow, and was gradually mouldering away. Bruneseau raised his lantern and examined this fragment; it was of very fine linen, and at one of the corners less gnawn than the rest, could be distinguished an heraldic crown embroidered above these seven letters LAUBESP. The crown was a marquis's crown, and the seven letters signified *Laubespine*. What they had under their eyes was no less than a piece of Marat's winding-sheet. Marat, in his youth, had had amours, at the time when he was attached to the household of the Comte d'Artois in the capacity of physician to the stables. Of these amours with a great lady, which are historically notorious, this sheet had remained to him as a waif or a souvenir; on his death, as it was the only fine linen at his lodgings, he was buried in it. Old women wrapped up the tragic friend of the people for the tomb in this sheet which had known voluptuousness. Bruneseau passed on; the strip was left where it was. Was it through contempt or respect? Marat deserved both. And then destiny was so impressed on it that a hesitation was felt about touching it. Moreover, things of the sepulchre should be left at the place which they select. Altogether the relic was a strange one; a marquise had slept in it, Marat had rotted in it; and it had passed through the Pantheon to reach the

sewer-rats. This rag from an alcove, every crease in which Watteau would have formerly joyously painted, ended by becoming worthy of the intent glance of Dante.

The visit to the subways of Paris lasted for seven years, from 1805 to 1812. While going along, Bruneseau designed, directed, and carried out considerable operations; in 1808 he lowered the Ponceau drain, and everywhere pushing out new lines, carried the sewer in 1809 under the Rue St. Denis to the Fountain of the Innocents; in 1810 under the Rue Froidmanteau and the Salpêtrière; in 1811 under the Rue Neuve des Petits Pères, under the Rue du Mail, the Rue de l'Echarpe and the Place Royal; in 1812 under the Rue de la Paix and the Chaussée d'Antin. At the same time he disinfected and cleansed the entire net-work, and in the second year called his son-in-law Nargaud to his assistance. It is thus that at the beginning of this century the old society flushed its subway and performed the toilette of its drain. It was so much cleaned at any rate. Winding, cracked, unpaved, full of pits, broken by strange elbows, ascending and descending illogically, fetid, savage, ferocious, submerged in darkness, with cicatrices on its stones and scars on its walls, and gruesome,—such was the old drain of Paris, retrospectively regarded. Ramifications in all directions, crossings of trenches, branches, dials and stars as in saps, blind guts and alleys, arches covered with saltpetre, infected pits, scabby exudations on the walls, drops falling from the roof, and darkness; nothing equalled the horror of this old excremental crypt; the digestive apparatus of Babylon, a den, a trench, a gulf pierced with streets, a Titanic molehill, in which the mind fancies that it sees that old enormous blind mole, the past, crawling in the shadows amid the ordure which had once been splendor.

Such, we repeat, was the sewer of the olden time.

## CHAPTER COLI.

### PRESENT PROGRESS: FUTURE PROGRESS.

At the present day the sewer is clean, cold, straight and correct, and almost realizes the ideal of what is understood in England by the word "respectable." It is neat and

gray; built with the plumb-line, we might almost say coquettishly. It resembles a contractor who has become a councillor of state. You almost see clearly in it, and the mud behaves itself decently. At the first glance you might be inclined to take it for one of those subterranean passages so common formerly, and so useful for the flights of monarchs and princes in the good old times "when the people loved its kings." The present sewer is a handsome sewer, the pure style prevails there; the classic rectilinear Alexandrine, which, expelled from poetry, appears to have taken refuge in architecture, seems blended with all the stones of this long, dark, and white vault; each vomitory is an arcade, and the Rue de Rivoli sets the fashion even in the cloacs. However, if the geometric line be anywhere in its place, it is assuredly so in the stercoreous trench of a great city, where everything must be subordinated to the shortest road. The sewer has at the present day assumed a certain official aspect, and the police reports of which it is sometimes the object, are no longer deficient in respect to it. The words which characterize it in the administrative language are lofty and dignified; what used to be called a gut is now called a gallery, and what used to be a hole is now a "look." Villon would no longer recognize his old temporary lodgings. This net-work of cellars still has its population of rodents, pullulating more than ever; from time to time a rat, an old mustache, ventures his head at the window of the drain and examines the Parisians; but even these vermin are growing tame, as they are satisfied with their subterranean palace. The cloaca no longer retains its primitive ferocity, and the rain which sullied the drain of olden times, washes that of the present day. Still, do not trust to it too entirely, for miasmas still inhabit it, and it is rather hypocritical than irreproachable. In spite of all the prefecture of police and the board of health have done, it exhales a vague suspicious odor, like Tartuffe after confession. Still we must allow that, take it altogether, flushing is an homage which the sewer pays to civilization, and as from this point of view Tartuffe's conscience is a progress upon the stable of Augias, it is certain that the sewer of Paris has been improved. It is more than a progress, it is a transmutation; between the old and the present sewer there is a revolution. Who effected this

revolution? the man whom every one forgets and whom we have named—Bruneseau.

Digging the sewerage of Paris was no small task. The last ten centuries have toiled at it without being able to finish, no more than they could finish Paris. The sewer, in fact, receives all the counterstrokes of the growth of Paris. It is in the ground a species of dark polype with a thousand antennæ, which grows below, equally with the city above. Each time that city forms a street, the sewer stretches out an arm. The old monarchy only constructed twenty-three thousand three hundred metres of drain, and Paris had reached that point on January 1st, 1806. From this period, to which we shall presently revert, the work has been usefully and energetically taken up and continued. Napoleon built—and the figures are curious—four thousand eight hundred and four metres; Charles X., ten thousand eight hundred and thirty-six; Louis Philippe, eighty-nine thousand and twenty; the republic of 1848, twenty-three thousand three hundred and eighty-one; the present government seventy thousand five hundred; altogether two hundred and twenty-six thousand six hundred metres, or sixty leagues of sewer—the enormous entrails of Paris—an obscure ramification constantly at work, an unknown and immense construction. As we see, the subterranean labyrinth of Paris is, at the present day, more than tenfold what it was at the beginning of the century. It would be difficult to imagine all the perseverance and efforts required to raise this cloaca to the point of relative perfection at which it now is. It was with great trouble that the old monarchical provost, and in the last ten years of the eighteenth century the revolutionary mayoralty, succeeded in boring the five leagues of drains which existed prior to 1806. All sorts of obstacles impeded this operation; some peculiar to the nature of the soil, others inherent in the prejudices of the working population of Paris. Paris is built on a stratum strangely rebellious to the pick, the spade, the borer, and human manipulation. Nothing is more difficult to pierce and penetrate than this geological formation on which the marvellous historical formation called Paris is superposed. So soon as labor in any shape ventures into this layer of alluvium, subterranean resistances abound. They are liquid clay, running springs, hard rocks, and

that soft and deep mud which the special science call "mustard." The pick advances laboriously in the calcareous layers, alternating with very thin veins of clay and schistose strata incrustated with oyster-shells, which are contemporaries of the pre-Adamite oceans. At times a stream suddenly bursts into a tunnel just commenced; and inundates the workmen, or a slip of chalk takes place and rushes forward with the fury of a cataract, breaking like glass the largest supporting shores. Very recently at La Villette, when it was found necessary to carry the collecting sewer under the St. Martin canal without stopping the navigation or letting off the water, a fissure formed in the bed of the canal, and the water poured into the tunnel, deriding the efforts of the draining pumps. It was found necessary to employ a diver to seek for the fissure which was in the mouth of the great basin, and it was only stopped up with great difficulty. Elsewhere, near the Seine, and even at some distance from the river, as for instance, at Belleville, bottomless sands are found in which men have been swallowed up. Add asphyxia by miasmas, interment by slips and sudden breaking in of the soil; add typhus, too, with which the workmen are slowly impregnated. In our days, after having hollowed the gallery of Clichy with a *banquette* to convey the main water conduit of the Ourque, a work performed by trenches ten metres in depth; after having arched the Bièvre from the Boulevard de l'Hopital to the Seine, in the midst of earth-slips and by the help of trenching, often through putrid matter, and of shores; after having, in order to deliver Paris from the torrent-like waters of the Montmartre, and give an outlet to the fluviate pond of twenty-three acres which stagnated near the Barrière des Martyrs; after having, we say, constructed the line of sewers from the Barrière Blanche to the Aubervilliers road, in four months, by working day and night at a depth of eleven metres; and having carried out subterraneously a drain in the Rue Barre du Bec without trenching, a thing unknown before at a depth of six metres—the surveyor Monnot died. After arching three thousand metres of sewer in all parts of the city, from Rue Traversière Saint Antoine to Rue de l'Ourcine; after having, by the Arbalète branch, freed the Censier-Mouffetard square from pluvial inundations; after having

constructed the St. George's Drain through liquid sand upon rubble and beton, and after having lowered the formidable pitch of the Notre Dame de St. Lazarette branch—the engineer Duleau died. There are no bulletins for such acts of bravery, which are more useful, however, than the brutal butchery of battle-fields.

The sewers of Paris were in 1832 far from being what they are now. Bruneseau gave the impulse, but it required the cholera to determine the vast reconstruction which has taken place since. It is surprising to say, for instance, that in 1821 a portion of the begirding sewer, called the Grand Canal, as at Venice, still stagnated in the open air, in the Rue des Gourdes. It was not until 1823 that the city of Paris found in its pocket the twenty-six thousand six hundred and eighty francs, six centimes, needed to cover in this turpitude. The three absorbing wells of the Combat la Cunette and St. Mandé, with their disgorging apparatus, draining wells, and deodorizing branches, merely date from 1836. The intestine canal of Paris has been re-made, and, as we said, augmented more than tenfold during the last quarter of a century. Thirty years ago, at the period of the insurrection of June 5 and 6, it was still in many parts almost the old sewer. A great number of streets that now convex, were at that time broken causeways. There could be frequently seen at the bottom of the watersheds of streets and squares, large square gratings, whose iron glistened from the constant passage of the crowd, dangerous and slippery for vehicles, and throwing horses down. The official language of the department of the roads and bridges gave these gratings the expressive name of *Cassis*. In 1832 in a number of streets,—Rue de l'Etoile, Rue St. Louis, Rue du Temple, Rue Vielle du Temple, Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth, Rue Folie Méricourt, Quai aux Fleurs, Rue du Petit Muse, Rue de Normandie, Rue Pont aux Biches, Rue des Marais, Faubourg St. Martin, Rue Notre Dame des Victoires, Faubourg Montmartre, Rue Grange Batelière, at the Champs Elysées, the Rue Jacob, and the Rue de Tournon, the old Gothic cloaca still cynically displayed its throats. They were enormous stone orifices, sometimes surrounded with posts, with a monumental effrontery. Paris in 1806 was much in the same state as regards drains as in May,

1663; five thousand three hundred and twenty-eight toises. After Bruneseau, on January 1, 1832, there were forty thousand three hundred metres. From 1806 to 1831, seven hundred and fifty metres were on the average constructed annually; since then eight and even ten thousand metres have been made every year in brick-work, with a coating of concrete on a foundation of beton. At two hundred francs the metre, the sixty leagues of drainage in the Paris of to-day represents forty-eight million francs.

In addition to the economic progress to which we alluded at the outset, serious considerations as to the public health are attached to this immense question,—the drainage of Paris. Paris is situated between two sheets, a sheet of water and a sheet of air. The sheet of water, lying at a very great depth, but already tapped by two borings, is supplied by the stratum of green sandstone situated between the chalk and the jurassic limestone; this stratum may be represented by a disc with a radius of twenty-five leagues; a multitude of rivers and streams drip into it, and the Seine, the Marne, the Yonne, the Oise, the Aisne, the Cher, the Vienne, and the Loire, are drunk in a glass of water from the Grenelle well. The sheet of water is salubrious, for it comes from the sky first, and then from the earth, but the sheet of air is unhealthy, for it comes from the sewer. All the miasmas of the cloaca are mingled with the breathing of the city—hence this bad breath. The atmosphere taken from above a dung-heap, it has been proved scientifically, is purer than the atmosphere taken from over Paris. Within a given time, by the aid of progress, improvements in machinery, and enlightenment, the sheet of water will be employed to purify the sheet of air, that is to say, to wash the sewer. It is known that by washing the sewer we mean restoring the ordure to the earth by sending dung to the arable lands, the manure to the grass lands. Through this simple fact there will be for the whole social community a diminution of wretchedness, and an augmentation of health. At the present hour the radiation of the diseases of Paris extends for fifty leagues round the Louvre, taken as the axle of this pestilential wheel.

We might say that for the last ten centuries the cloaca has been the misery of Paris, and the sewer is the viciousness which

the city has in its blood. The popular instinct has never been deceived, and the trade of the sewer-man was formerly almost as dangerous and almost as repulsive to the people as that of the knacker, which so long was regarded with horror, and left to the hangman. Great wages were required to induce a bricklayer to disappear in this fetid sap; the ladder of the well-digger hesitated to plunge into it; it was said proverbially *Going into the sewer is entering the tomb*, and all sorts of hideous legends, as we said, covered this colossal cesspool with terrors. It is a formidable fosse which bears traces of the revolutions of the globe as well as the revolutions of men, and vestiges may be found there of every cataclysm, from the shells of the Deluge to the ragged sheet of Marat.

## CHAPTER CCLII.

### THE SEWER AND ITS SURPRISES.

It was in the sewer of Paris that Jean Valjean found himself. This is a further resemblance of Paris with the sea, as in the ocean the diver can disappear there. It was an extraordinary transition, in the very heart of the city. Jean Valjean had left the city, and in a twinkling, the time required to lift a trap and let it fall again, he had passed from broad daylight to complete darkness, from midday to midnight, from noise to silence, from the uproar of thunder to the stagnation of the tomb, and, by an incident far more prodigious even than that of the Rue Polonceau, from the extremest peril to the most absolute security. A sudden fall into a cellar, disappearance in the oubliette of Paris, leaving this street where death was all around for this species of sepulchre in which was life; it was a strange moment. He stood for some minutes as if stunned, listening and amazed. The trap-door of safety had suddenly opened beneath him, and the heavenly kindness had to some extent snared him by treachery. Admirable ambushes of Providence! Still the wounded man did not stir, and Jean Valjean did not know whether what he was carrying into this fosse were alive or dead.

His first sensation was blindness, for he all at once could see nothing. He felt too that in a moment he had become deaf, for he



could hear nothing more. The frenzied storm of murder maintained a few yards above him only reached him confusedly and indistinctly, and like a rumor in a deep place. He felt that he had something solid under his feet, but that was all; still it was sufficient. He stretched out one arm, then the other; he touched the wall on both sides and understood that the passage was narrow; his foot slipped, and he understood that the pavement was damp. He advanced one foot cautiously, fearing a hole, a cesspool, or some gulf, and satisfied himself that the pavement went onwards. A fetid gust warned him of the spot where he was. At the expiration of a few minutes he was no longer blind, a little light fell through the trap by which he descended, and his eye grew used to this cellar. He began to distinguish something. The passage in which he had run to earth—no other word expresses the situation better—was walled up behind him; it was one of those blind alleys called in the special language branches. Before him he had another wall, a wall of night. The light of the trap expired ten or twelve feet from the spot where Jean Valjean was, and scarce produced a livid whiteness on a few yards of the damp wall of the sewer. Beyond that the opaqueness was massive, to enter it seemed horrible, and resembled being swallowed up by an earthquake. Yet it was possible to bury oneself in this wall of fog, and it must be done; and must even be done quickly. Jean Valjean thought that the grating which he had noticed in the street might also be noticed by the troops, and that all depended on chance. They might also come down into the well and search, so he had not a minute to lose. He had laid Marius on the ground, and now picked him up—that is again the right expression—took him on his shoulders and sat out. He resolutely entered the darkness.

The truth is, that they were less saved than Jean Valjean believed; perils of another nature, but equally great, awaited them. After the flashing whirlwind of the combat, came the cavern of miasmas and snares, after the chaos the cloaca. Jean Valjean had passed from one circle of the Inferno into another. When he had gone fifty yards he was obliged to stop, for a question occurred to him; the passage ran into another, which it intersected, and two roads offered them-

selves. Which should he take? ought he to turn to the left or right? how was he to find his way in this black labyrinth? This labyrinth, we have said, has a clue in its slope, and following the slope leads to the river. Jean Valjean understood this immediately: he said to himself that he was probably in the sewer of the Halles, that if he turned to the left and followed the incline he would arrive in a quarter of an hour at some opening on the Seine between the Pont au Change and the Pont Neuf, that is to say, appear in broad daylight in the busiest part of Paris. Perhaps he might come out at some street opening, and passers-by would be stupefied at seeing two blood-stained men emerge from the ground at their feet. The police would come up, and they would be carried off to the nearest guard-room; they would be prisoners before they had come out. It would better, therefore, to bury himself in the labyrinth, confide in the darkness, and leave the issue to Providence.

He went up the incline and turned to the right; when he had gone round the corner of the gallery the distant light from the trap disappeared, the curtain of darkness fell on him again, and he became blind once more. For all that he advanced as rapidly as he could; Marius' arms were passed round his neck, and his feet hung down behind. He held the two arms with one hand and felt the wall with the other. Marius' cheek touched his and was glued to it, as it was bloody, and he felt a warm stream which came from Marius drip on him and penetrate his clothing. Still, a warm breath in his ear, which touched the wounded man's mouth, indicated respiration, and consequently life. The passage in which Jean Valjean was now walking was not so narrow as the former, and he advanced with some difficulty. The rain of the previous night had not yet passed off, and formed a small torrent in the centre, and he was forced to hug the wall in order not to lave his feet in the water. He went on thus darkly, resembling beings of the night groping in the invisible, and subterraneously lost in the veins of gloom. Still, by degrees, either that a distant grating sent a little floating light into this opaque mist, or that his eyes grew accustomed to the obscurity, he regained some vague vision, and began to notice confusedly, at one moment the wall he was touching, at another the vault under

which he was passing. The pupil is dilated at night, and eventually finds daylight in it. in the same way as the soul is dilated in misfortune and eventually finds God in it.

To direct himself was difficult, for the sewers represent, so to speak, the outline of the streets standing over them. There were in the Paris of that day two thousand two hundred streets, and imagine beneath them that forest of dark branches called the sewer. The system of drains existing at that day, if placed end on end, would have given a length of eleven leagues. We have already said that the present network, owing to the special activity of the last thirty years, is no less than sixty leagues. Jean Valjean began by deceiving himself; he fancied that he was under the Rue St. Denis, and it was unlucky that he was not so. There is under that street an old stone drain, dating from Louis XIII., which runs straight to the collecting sewer, called the Great Sewer, with only one turn on the right, by the old Court of Miracles, and a single branch, the Saint Martin sewer, whose four arms cut each other at right angles. But the gut of the Truanderie, whose entrance was near the Corinth wine-shop, never communicated with the sewer of the Rue St. Denis; it falls into the Montmartre drain, and that is where Jean Valjean now was. There opportunities for losing himself were abundant, for the Montmartre drain is one of the most labyrinthine of the old network. Luckily Jean Valjean had left behind him the drain of the Halles, whose geometrical plan represents a number of intertwined topmasts; but he had before him more than one embarrassing encounter, and more than one street corner—for they are streets—offering itself in the obscurity as a note of interrogation. In the first place on his left, the vast Plâtrière drain, a sort of Chinese puzzle, thrusting forth and intermingling its chaos of T's and Z's under the Post Office, and the rotunda of the Halle au blé as far as the Seine, where it terminates in a Y; secondly, on his right the curved passage of the Rue du Cadran, with its three teeth, which are so many blind alleys; thirdly, on his left the Mail branch, complicated almost at the entrance by a species of fork, and running with repeated zigzags to the great cesspool of the Louvre, which ramifies in every direction; and lastly, on his right the blind alley of the Rue du Jeûneurs,

without counting other pitfalls, ere he reached the surrounding drain which alone could lead him to some issue sufficiently distant to be safe.

Had Jean Valjean had any notion of all we have just stated he would have quickly perceived, merely by feeling the wall, that he was not in the subterranean gallery of the Rue St. Denis. Instead of the old carved stone, instead of the old architecture haughty and royal even in the drain, with its timber supports and running courses of granite, which cost eight hundred livres the toise, he would feel under his hand moderate cheapness, the economic expedient, brick work supported on a layer of beton, which costs two hundred francs the metre, the bourgeois masonry, known as *à petits maters*; but he knew nothing of all this. He advanced anxiously, but calmly, seeing nothing hearing nothing, plunged into chance, that is to say, swallowed up in Providence. By degrees, however, we are bound to state that a certain amount of horror beset him, and the shadow which enveloped him entered his mind. He was walking in an enigma. This aqueduct of the cloaca is formidable for it intersects itself in a vertiginous manner, and it is a mournful thing to be caught in this Paris of darkness. Jean Valjean was obliged to find, and almost invent, his road without seeing it. In this unknown region each step that he ventured might be his last. How was he to get out of it? would he find an issue? would he find it in time? could he pierce and penetrate this colossal subterranean sponge with its passages of stone would he meet there some unexpected knot of darkness? would he arrive at something inextricable and impassable? would Marius die of hemorrhage, and himself of hunger would they both end by being lost there, and form two skeletons in a corner of this night? He did not know; he asked himself all this and could not find an answer. The intestines of Paris are a precipice, and like the prophet he was in the monster's belly.

He suddenly had a surprise; at the most unexpected moment, and without ceasing to walk in a straight line, he perceived that he was no longer ascending, the water of the gutter splashed against his heels instead of coming to his toes. The sewer was now descending; why? was he about to reach the Seine suddenly? That danger was great, but

the peril of turning back was greater still, and he continued to advance. He was not proceeding toward the Seine; the ridge which the soil of Paris makes on the right bank disembogues one of its watersheds into the Seine, and the other in the great sewer. The crest of this ridge, which determines the division of the waters, designs a most capricious line; the highest point is in the St. Avoye sewer, beyond the Rue Michel-le-comte in the Louvre sewer, near the boulevards, and in the Montmartre drain, near the Halles. This highest point Jean Valjean had reached, and he was proceeding toward the surrounding sewer, or in the right direction, but he knew it not. Each time that he reached a branch he felt the corners, and if he found the opening narrower than the passage in which he was he did not enter, but continued his march, correctly judging that any narrower way must end in a blind alley, and could only take him from his object, that is to say, an outlet. He thus avoided the fourfold snare laid for him in the darkness by the four labyrinths which we have enumerated. At a certain moment he recognized that he was getting from under that part of Paris petrified by the riot, where the barricades had suppressed circulation, and returning under living and normal Paris. He suddenly heard above his head a sound like thunder, distant but continuous; it was the rolling of vehicles.

He had been walking about half an hour, at least that was the calculation he made, and had not thought of resting; he had merely changed the hand which held Marius up. The darkness was more profound than ever, but this darkness reassured him. All at once he saw his shadow before him; it stood upon a faint and almost indistinct redness which vaguely impurpled the roadway at his feet and the vault above his head, and glided along the greasy walls of the passage. He turned his head in stupefaction, and saw behind him at a distance, which appeared immense, a sort of horrible star glistening, which seemed to be looking at him. It was the gloomy police star rising in the sewer. Behind this star there moved confusedly nine or ten black, upright, indistinct, and terrible forms.

The meaning was as follows: on the day of June 6th a battue of the sewers was ordered, for it was feared lest the conquered should

fly to them as a refuge, and Prefect Giquet ordered occult Paris to be searched, while General Bugeaud swept public Paris; a double connected operation, which required a double strategy of the public force, represented above by army and beneath by the police. Three squads of agents and sewer-men explored the subway of Paris, the first the right bank, the second the left bank, and the third the Cité. The agents were armed with carbines, bludgeons, swords, and daggers, and what was at this moment pointed at Jean Valjean was the lantern of the round of the right bank. This round had just inspected the winding gallery and three blind alleys which are under the Rue du Cadran. While the police were carrying their light about there, Jean Valjean in his progress came to the entrance of the gallery, found it narrower than the main gallery, and had not entered it. The police, on coming out of the Cadran gallery, fancied that they could hear the sound of footsteps in the direction of the outer drain, and they were really Jean Valjean's footsteps. The head sergeant of the round raised his lantern, and the squad began peering into the midst in the direction whence the noise had come.

It was an indescribable moment for Jean Valjean; luckily, if he saw the lantern well, the lantern saw him badly, for it was the light and he was the darkness. He was too far off, and blended with the blackness of the spot, so he drew himself up against the wall and stopped. However, he did not explain to himself what was moving behind him; want of sleep and food, and emotion had made him to pass into a visionary state. He saw a flash, and round this flash sprites. What was it? he did not understand. When Jean Valjean stopped the noise ceased; the police listened and heard nothing, they looked and saw nothing, and hence consulted together. There was at that period at that point in the Montmartre drain, a sort of square called *de service*, which has since been suppressed, owing to the small internal lake which the torrents of rain formed there, and the squad assembled on this square. Jean Valjean saw them make a sort of circle, and their bull-dog heads came together and whispered. The result of this council held by the watch-dogs was that they were mistaken, that there had been no noise, that there was nobody there, that it was useless to enter the

surrounding sewer, that it would be time wasted, but that they must hurry to the St. Merry drain, for if there were anything to be done, and any "boussingot" to track, it would be there. From time to time, parties new-sole their old insults. In 1832 the word *boussingot* formed the transition between the word *Jacobin* no longer current, and the word *demagogue*, at that time almost unused, and which has since done such excellent service. The sergeant gave orders to left-wheel toward the watershed of the Seine. Had they thought of dividing into two squads and going in both directions, Jean Valjean would have been caught. It is probable that the instructions of the Prefecteur, fearing the chance of a fight with a large body of insurgents, forbade the round from dividing. The squad set out again, leaving Jean Valjean behind; and in all this movement he perceived nothing except the eclipse of the lantern, which was suddenly turned away.

Before starting, the sergeant, to satisfy his police conscience, discharged his carbine in the direction where Jean Valjean was. The detonation rolled echoing along the crypt, like the rumbling of these Titanic bowels. A piece of plaster which fell into the gutter, and plashed up the water a few yards from Jean Valjean warned him that the bullet had struck the vault above his head. Measured and slow steps echoed for some time along the wooden causeway, growing more and more deadened by the growing distance; the group of black forms disappeared; a light oscillated and flashed, forming on the vault a ruddy circle, which decreased and disappeared; the silence again became profound, the obscurity again became complete, and blindness and deafness again took possession of the gloom and Jean Valjean, not daring yet to stir, remained leaning for a long time against the wall, with out-stretched ear and dilated eyeballs, watching the evanishment of the patrol of phantoms.

## CHAPTER CCLIII.

### THE TRACKED MAN.

WE must do the police of that day the justice of saying that even in the gravest public conjectures, they imperturbably accomplished their duties as watchmen. A riot was not in their eyes a pretext to leave the bridle to

malefactors and to neglect society for the reason that the government was in danger. The ordinary duties were performed correctly in addition to the extraordinary duties, and were in no way disturbed. In the midst of an incalculable political event, under the pressure of a possible revolution, an agent, not allowing himself to be affected by the insurrection and the barricade, would track a robber. Some thing very like this occurred on the afternoon of June 6, on the right bank of the Seine, a little beyond the Pont des Invalides. There is no bank there at the present day, and the appearance of the spot has been altered. On this slope two men, a certain distance apart, were observing each other; the one in front seemed to be trying to get away, while the one behind seemed to be waiting to catch him up. It was like a game of chess played at a distance and silently; neither of them seemed to be in a hurry, and both walked slowly, as if they were afraid that increased speed on the part of one would be imitated by the other. It might have been called an appetite following a prey, without appearing to do so purposely: the prey was crafty, and kept on guard.

The proportions required between the tracked ferret and the tracking dog were observed. The one trying to escape was thin and weak; the one trying to catch was a tall fellow, and evidently a rough customer. The first, feeling himself the weaker, avoided the second, but did so in a deeply furious way; any one who could have observed him would have seen in his eyes the gloomy hostility of flight, and all the threat which there is in fear; the slope was deserted, there were no passers-by, not even a boatman or raftsmen in the boats moored here and there. They could only be noticed easily from the opposite quay, and any one who had watched them at that distance, would have seen that the man in front appeared a bristling, ragged, and shambling fellow, anxious and shivering under a torn blouse, while the other was a classic and official personage, wearing the frock-coat of authority buttoned up to the chin. The reader would probably recognize these two men, were he to see them more closely. What was the object of the last one? Probably he wished to clothe the other man more warmly. When a man dressed by the state pursues a man in rags, it is in order to make of him also a man dressed by the state.

The difference of color is the sole question, —to be dressed in blue is glorious, to be dressed in red is disagreeable, for there is a purple of the lower classes. It was probably some disagreeable thing and some purple of this sort which the first man desired to avoid.

If the other allowed him to go on ahead, and did not yet arrest him, it was, in all appearance, in the hope of seeing him arrive at some significative rendezvous and some group worth capturing. This delicate operation is called tracking. What renders this conjecture highly probable, is the fact that the buttoned-up man perceiving from the slope an empty *fiacre* passing, made a sign to the driver; the driver understood, evidently perceived with whom he had to deal, turned round, and began following the two men along the quay. This was not perceived by the ragged, shambling fellow in front. The hackney coach rolled along under the trees of the Champs Elysées, and over the parapet could be seen the bust of the driver, whip in hand. One of the secret instructions of the police to the agents is "always have a hackney coach at hand in case of need." While each of these men manœuvred with irreproachable strategy, they approached an incline in the quay, which allowed drivers coming from Passy to water their horses in the river. This incline has since been suppressed for the sake of symmetry,—horses die of thirst, but the eye is flattered. It was probable that the man in the blouse would ascend by this incline in order to try and escape in the Champs Elysées, a place adorned with trees, but, to make up for that, much frequented by police agents, where the other could easily procure assistance. This point of the quay is a very little distance from the house brought from Moret to Paris in 1824, by Colonel Brack, and called the house of Francis I. A piquet is always stationed there. To the great surprise of his watcher, the tracked man did not turn up the road to the watering-place, but continued to advance along the bank parallel with the quay. His position was evidently becoming critical, for unless he threw himself into the Seine, what could he do?

There was no means now left him of returning to the quay, no incline or no steps, and they were close to the spot marked by the turn in the Seine, near the Pont de Jena, where the bank, gradually contracting, ended in a narrow strip, and was lost in the water.

There he must inevitably find himself blocked between the tall wall on his right, the river on his left and facing him, and authority at his heels. It is true that this termination of the bank was masked from sight by a pile of rubbish seven feet high, the result of some demolition. But did this man hope to conceal himself profitably behind this heap? the expedient would have been puerile. He evidently did not dream of that, for the innocence of robbers does not go so far. The pile of rubbish formed on the water-side a sort of eminence extending in a promontory to the quay wall; the pursued man reached this small mound and went round it, so that he was no longer seen by the other. The latter, not seeing, was not seen, and he took advantage of this to give up all dissimulation and walk very fast. In a few minutes he reached the heap and turned it, but there stood stupefied. The man he was pursuing was not there, it was a total eclipse of the man in the blouse. The bank did not run more than thirty yards beyond the heap, and then plunged under the water which washed the quay wall. The fugitive could not have thrown himself into the Seine, or have climbed up the quay wall, without being seen by his pursuer. What had become of him?

The man in the buttoned-up coat walked to the end of the bank and stood there for a moment, thoughtfully, with clenched fists and scowling eye. All at once he smote his forehead; he had just perceived, at the point where the ground ended and the water began, a wide, low, arched, iron grating, provided with a heavy lock, and three massive hinges. This grating, a sort of gate pierced at the bottom of the quay, opened on the river as much as on the bank, and a black stream poured from under it into the Seine. Beyond the heavy rusty bars could be distinguished a sort of arched and dark passage. The man folded his arms and looked at the grating reproachfully, and this look not being sufficient, he tried to push it open, he shook it, but it offered a sturdy resistance. It was probable that it had just been opened, although no sound had been heard, a singular thing with so rusty a gate, but it was certain that it had been closed again. This indicated that the man who had opened the gate had not a pick-lock but a key. This evidence at once burst on the mind of the

man who was trying to open the grating, and drew from him this indignant apostrophe,—

“That is strong ! a government key !”

Then, calming himself immediately, he expressed a whole internal world of ideas by this outburst of monosyllables, marked by an almost ironical accent,—

“Stay, stay, stay, stay.”

This said, hoping we know not what, either to see the man come out or others enter, he posted himself on the watch behind the heap of rubbish, with the patient rage of a yard-mastiff. On its side, the hackney coach which regulated itself by all his movements, stopped above him near the parapet. The driver, foreseeing a long halt, put on his horses the nose bag full of damp oats so well known to the Parisians upon whom the government, we may remark parenthetically, places it sometimes. The few passers over the Pont de Jena, before going on, turned their heads to look for a moment at these motionless objects,—the man on the bank and the hackney coach on the quay.

## CHAPTER CCLIV.

### HE TOO BEARS HIS CROSS.

JEAN VALJEAN had resumed his march, and had not stopped again. This march grew more and more laborious; for the level of these passages varies; the average height is about five feet six inches, and was calculated for a man's stature. Jean Valjean was compelled to stoop so as not to dash Marius against the roof, and was forced at each moment to bend down, then draw himself up and incessantly feel the wall. The dampness of the stones and of the flooring rendered them bad supports, either for the hand or the foot, and he tottered in the hideous dung-heap of the city. The intermittent flashes of the street gratings only appeared at lengthened intervals, and were so faint that the bright sunshine seemed to be moonlight; all the rest was fog, miasma, opaqueness, and blackness. Jean Valjean was hungry and thirsty, the latter most, and it was like the sea, there was water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink. His strength, which, as we know, was prodigious, and but slightly diminished by age, owing to his chaste and sober life, was, however, beginning to give way; fatigue assailed him, and his decreas-

ing strength increased the weight of his burden. Marius, who was perhaps dead, was heavy, like all inert bodies, but Jean Valjean held him so that his chest was not affected, and he could breathe with pressure. He felt between his legs the rapid gliding of rats, and one was so startled as to bite him. From time to time a gush of fresh air came through the gratings, which revived him.

It might be about three p. m. when he reached the external sewer, and was at first amazed by the sudden widening. He unexpectedly found himself in a gallery whose two walls his outstretched arms did not reach, and under an arch which his head did not touch. The grand sewer, in fact, is eight feet in width by seven high. At the point where the Montmartre drain joins the grand sewer two other subterranean galleries, that of the Rue de Provence and that of the Abattoir, form cross roads. Between these four ways a less sagacious man would have been undecided, but Jean Valjean selected the widest, that is to say, the encircling sewer. But here the question came back again,—Should he ascend or descend? He thought that the situation was pressing, and that he must at all risks now reach the Seine, in other words, descend, so he turned to the left. It was fortunate that he did so, for it would be an error to suppose that the encircling sewer has two issues, one toward Bercy, the other toward Passy, and that it is, as its name indicates, the subterranean belt of Paris on the right bank. The grand sewer, which is nought else, it must be borne in mind, than the old Menilmontant stream, leads, if you ascend it, to a blind alley, that is to say, to its old starting-point, a spring at the foot of Menilmontant mound. It has no direct communication with the branch which collects the waters of Paris after leaving the Popincourt quarter, and which falls into the Seine by the Amelot sewer above the old isle of Louviers. This branch, which completes the collecting sewer, is separated from it under the Rue Menilmontant by masonry-work, which marks where the waters divide to run up-stream and down-stream. If Jean Valjean had remounted the gallery he would have arrived, exhausted by fatigue and dying at a wall; he would have been lost.

Strictly speaking, by going back a little way, entering the passage of les Filles du Calvaire, on condition that he did not

hesitate at the subterranean dial of the Boucherat cross-roads, by taking the St. Louis passage, then on the left the St. Gillestrench, then by turning to the right and avoiding the St. Sebastian gallery, he might have reached the Amelot sewer, and then if he did not lose his way in the species of F which is under the Bastille, he would have reached the issue on the Seine near the arsenal. But for that he must have thoroughly known, in all its ramifications and piercings, the enormous madreporé of the sewer. Now we dwell on the fact that he knew nothing of this frightful labyrinth in which he was marching, and had he been asked where he was he would have replied,—in night. His instinct served him well; going down, in fact, was the only salvation possible. He left on his right the two passages which ramify in the shape of a claw under the Rues Laffitte and St. Georges, and the long bifurcate corridor of the Chaussée d'Antin. A little beyond an affluent, which was probably the Madeleine branch, he stopped, for he was very weary. A large grating, probably the one in the Rue d'Anjou, produced an almost bright light. Jean Valjean, with the gentle movements which a brother would bestow on a wounded brother, laid Marius on the *banquette* of the drain, and his white face gleamed under the white light of the trap as from the bottom of a tomb. His eyes were closed, his hair was attached to his forehead like pincers dried in blood, his hands were hanging and dead, his limbs cold, and blood was clotted at the corner of his lips. Coagulated blood had collected in his cravat knot, his shirt entered the wounds, and the cloth of his coat rubbed the gaping edges of the quivering flesh. Jean Valjean, removing the clothes with the tips of his fingers, laid his hand on his chest,—the heart still beat. Jean Valjean tore up his shirt, bandaged the wounds as well as he could, and stopped the blood that was flowing; then stooping down in this half daylight over Marius, who was still unconscious and almost breathless, he looked at him with indescribable hatred. In moving Marius' clothes he had found in his pockets two things, the loaf which he had forgotten the previous evening, and his pocket-book. He ate the bread and opened the pocket-book. On the first page he read the lines written by Marius, as will be remembered,—

“My name is Marius Pontmercy, carry my

body to my grandfather's, M. Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire in the Marais.”

Jean Valjean read by the light of the grating these lines, and remained for a time as it were absorbed in himself, and repeating in a low voice, M. Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire. He returned the portfolio to Marius's pocket; he had eaten, and his strength had come back to him. He raised Marius again, carefully laid his head on his right shoulder, and began descending the sewer. The grand sewer, running along the thalweg of the valley of Menilmontant, is nearly two leagues in length, and is paved for a considerable portion of the distance. This nominal torch of the streets of Paris, with which we enlighten for the reader Jean Valjean's subterranean march, he did not possess. Nothing informed him what zone of the city he was traversing, nor what distance he had gone, still the growing paleness of the flakes of light which he met from time to time indicated to him, that the sun was retiring from the pavement, and that day would be soon ended, and the rolling of vehicles over his head, which had become intermittent instead of continuous, and then almost ceased, proved to him that he was no longer under central Paris, and was approaching some solitary region, near the external boulevards or most distant quays, where there are fewer houses and streets, and the drain has fewer gratings. The obscurity thickened around Jean Valjean; still he continued to advance, groping his way in the shadow.

This shadow suddenly became terrible.

## CHAPTER CCLV.

### THE FONTIS.

HE felt that he was entering the water, and that he had under his feet no longer stone but mud. It often happens on certain coasts of Brittany or Scotland that a man, whether traveller or fisherman, walking at low water on the sands some distance from the coast suddenly perceives that during the last few minutes he has found some difficulty in walking. The shore beneath his feet is like pitch, his heels are attached to it, it is no longer sand but bird-lime; the sand is perfectly dry, but at every step taken, so

soon as the foot is raised the imprint it leaves is filled with water. The eye, however, has perceived no change, the immense expanse is smooth and calm, all the sand seems alike, nothing distinguishes the soil which is solid from that which is no longer so, and the little merry swarm of water-fleas continue to leap tumultuously round the feet of the wayfarer. The man follows his road, turns toward the land, and tries to approach the coast, not that he is alarmed; alarmed at what? Still he feels as if the heaviness of his feet increased at every step that he takes; all at once he sinks in, sinks in two or three inches. He is decidedly not on the right road, and stops to look about him. Suddenly he looks at his feet, but they have disappeared, the sand covers them. He draws his feet out of the sand and tries to turn back, but he sinks in deeper still. The sand comes up to his ankle, he pulls it out and turns to his left, when the sand comes to his knee, he turns to the right, and the sand comes up to his thigh, then he recognizes with indescribable terror that he is caught in a quicksand, and has under him the frightful medium in which a man can no more walk than a fish can swim. He throws away his load, if he has one, and lightens himself like a ship in distress; but it is too late, for the sand is already above his knees. He calls out, waves his hat or handkerchief, but the sand gains on him more and more. If the shore is deserted, if land is too distant, if the quicksand is too ill-famed, if there is no hero in the vicinity, it is all over with him, and he is compelled to be swallowed up. He is condemned to that long, awful, implacable interment, impossible to delay or hasten, which lasts hours, which never ends, which seizes you when erect, free, and in perfect health, which drags you by the feet, which at every effort you attempt, every cry you utter, drags you a little deeper; which seems to punish you for your resistance by a redoubled clutch, which makes a man slowly enter the ground while allowing him ample time to regard the houses, the trees, the green fields, the smoke from the villages on the plain, the sails of the vessels on the sea, the birds that fly and sing, the sun and the sky. A quicksand is a sepulchre that converts itself into a tide, and ascends from the bottom of the earth toward a living man. Each minute is an inexorable sexton. The

wretch tries to sit, to lie down, to walk, to crawl; all the movements that he makes bury him; he draws himself up and only sinks deeper; he feels himself being swallowed up; he yells, implores, cries to the clouds, writhes his arms, and grows desperate. Then he is on the sand up to his waist; the sand reaches his chest, he is but a bust. He raises his hands, utters furious groans, digs his nails into the sand, tries to hold by a pebble, raises himself on his elbows to tear up a weak seaweed, and sobs frenziedly; but the sand mounts. It reaches his shoulders, it reaches his neck, the face alone is visible now. The mouth cries, and the sand fills it, and then there is a silence. The eyes still look, but the sand closes them, and there is night. Then the forehead sinks, and a little hair waves above the sand; a hand emerges, digs up the sand, is waved, and disappears. It is a sinister effacement of a man. At times the rider is swallowed up with his horse, at times the carter with his cart; it is a shipwreck elsewhere than in the water, it is the land drowning man. The land penetrated by the ocean becomes a snare, it offers itself as a plain, and opens like a wave. The abyss has its acts of treachery.

Such a mournful adventure, always possible on some seashore, was also possible some thirty years ago in the sewer of Paris. Before the important work began in 1833, the subway of Paris was subject to sudden breakings-in. The water filtered through a subjacent and peculiarly friable soil; and the roadway, if made of paving-stones, as in the old drains, or of concrete upon beton, as in the new galleries, having no support, bent. A bend in a planking of this nature is a crevice, and a crevice is a bursting in. The roadway broke away for a certain length, and such a gap, a gulf of mud, was called in the special language *fontis*. What is a *fontis*? it is the quicksand of the seashore suddenly met with under-ground; it is the quicksand of St. Michel in a sewer. The moistened soil is in a state of fusion, all its particles are held in suspense in a shifting medium; it is not land and it is not water. The depth is at times very great. Nothing can be more formidable than meeting with such a thing; if water predominates death is quick, for a man is drowned; if earth predominate, death is slow for he is sucked down.

Can our readers imagine such a death? if



it be frightful to sink in a quicksand on the seashore what is it in a cloaca; instead of fresh air, daylight, a clear horizon, vast sounds, the free clouds from which life rains, the bark perceived in the distance, that hope under every form, of possible passers-by, of possible help up to the last minute,—instead of all this, deafness, blindness, a black archway, the interior of a tomb already made. death in the mud under a tombstone! slow asphyxia by uncleanness, a sarcophagus where asphyxia opens its clays in the filth, and clutches you by the throat; fetidness mingled with the death-rattle, mud instead of the sand, sulphuretted hydrogen in lieu of the hurricane, ordure instead of the ocean! and to call and gnash the teeth, and writhe and struggle and expire, with this enormous city which knows nothing of it above one's head.

Inexpressible the horror of dying thus! death sometimes expiates its atrocity by a certain terrible dignity. On the pyre, in shipwreck, a man may be great; in the flames, as in the foam, a superb attitude is possible, and a man transfigures himself. But in this case it is not so; for the death is unclean. It is humiliating to expire in such a way, and the last floating visions are abject. Mud is the synonym of shame, and is little, ugly, and infamous. To die in a butt of Malmsey like Clarence,—very well; but in a sewer like Escoubleau is horrible. To struggle in it is hideous, for at the same time as a man is dying, he is wallowing. There is enough darkness for it to be Hell, and enough mud for it to be merely a slough, and the dying man does not know whether he is about to become a spectre or a frog. Everywhere else the sepulchre is sinister, but here it is deformed.

The depth of the fontis varied, as did their length and density, according to the nature of the subsoil. At times a fontis was three or four feet deep, at times eight or ten, and sometimes it was bottomless. In one the mud was almost solid, in another nearly liquid. In the Lunière fontis, a man would have taken a day in disappearing, while he would have been devoured in five minutes by the Phélippeaux slough. The mud bears more or less well according to its degree of density, and a lad escapes where a man is lost. The first law of safety is to throw away every sort of loading, and every sewer-man

who felt the ground giving way under him began by getting rid of his basket of tools. The fontis had various causes, friability of soil, some convulsion beyond man's depth, violent summer showers, the incessant winter rain, and long fine rains. At times the weight of the surrounding houses upon a marshy or sandy soil broke the roofs of the subterranean galleries and made them shrink, or else it happened that the roadway broke and slit up under the terrific pressure. The pile of the Pantheon destroyed in this way about a century ago a portion of the cellars in the Montagne Ste Geneviève. When a sewer gave way under the weight of the houses, the disorder was expressed above in the street by a sort of saw-toothed parting between the paving-stones. This rent was developed in a serpentine line, along the whole length of the injured drain, and in such a case, the evil being visible, the remedy might be prompt. It often happened also that the internal ravage was not revealed by any scar outside, and in that case, woe to the sewer-men. Entering the injured drain incautiously, they might be lost in it. The old registers mention several nightmen buried in this manner in the fontis. They mention several names, among others that of the sewer-man swallowed up in a slough under the opening in the Rue Carême-Prenant, of the name of Blaise Poutrain; this Blaise was brother of Nicholas Poutrain, who was the last sexton of the cemetery called the Charnier des Innocents in 1785, when that cemetery expired. There was also the young and charming Vicomte d'Escoubleau, to whom we have alluded, one of the heroes of the siege of Lerida, where the assault was made in silk stockings and with violins at their head. L'Escoubleau, surprised one night with his cousin, the Duchesse de Sourdis, drowned himself in a cesspool of the Beautreillis drain, where he had taken refuge to escape the Duc. Madame de Sourdis, when informed of this death, asked for her smelling-bottle, and forgot to weep through inhaling her salts. In such a case, there is no love that holds out, the cloaca extinguishes it. Hero refuses to wash the corpse of Leander, and Thisbe stops her nose in the presence of Pyramus, saying, Pouah!

Jean Valjean found himself in the presence of a fontis: this sort of breaking in was frequent at that day in the subsoil of the Champs

Elysées, which was difficult to manage, and most injurious to underground drains owing to its extreme fluidity. This fluidity exceeds even the inconsistency of the sands of St. George's district, which could only be overcome by laying rubble on beton, and of the gas-infected clay strata in the Quartier des Martyrs, which are so liquid, that a passage could only be effected under the Galerie des Martyrs by means of an iron tube. When in 1836 the authorities demolished and rebuilt under the Faubourg St. Honoré the old stone drain in which Jean Valjean is now engaged, the shifting sand which is the subsoil of the Champs Elysées as far as the Seine offered such an obstacle that the operation lasted six months, to the great annoyance of those living on the water-side, especially such as had mansions and coaches. The works were more than difficult, they were dangerous, but we must allow that it rained for four and a half months, and the Seine overflowed thrice. The fontis which Jean Valjean came across was occasioned by the shower of the previous evening. A giving way of the pavement, which was badly supported by the subjacent sand, had produced a deposit of rain water, and when the filtering had taken place the ground broke in, and the roadway, being dislocated, fell into the mud. How far? it was impossible to say, for the darkness was denser there than anywhere else; it was a slough of mud in a cavern of night. Jean Valjean felt the pavement depart from under him as he entered the slough; there was water at top and mud underneath. He must pass it, for it was impossible to turn back: Marius was dying, and Jean Valjean worn out. Where else could he go? Jean Valjean advanced; the slough appeared of but slight depth at the first few steps, but as he advanced his legs sank in. He soon had mud up to the middle of the leg, and water up to the middle of the knee. He walked along, raising Marius with both arms as high as he could above the surface of the water; the mud now came up to his knees and the water to his waist. He could no longer draw back, and he sank in deeper and deeper. This mud, dense enough for the weight of one man, could not evidently bear two; Marius and Jean Valjean might have had a chance of getting out separately, but, for all that, Jean Valjean continued to advance, bearing the dying man, who was perhaps a corpse. The water came

up to his armpits, and he felt himself drowning; he could scarce move in the depth of mud in which he was standing, for the density which was the support was also the obstacle. He still kept Marius up, and advanced with an extraordinary expenditure of strength, but he was sinking. He had only his head out of water and his two arms sustaining Marius. In the old paintings of the Deluge there is a mother holding her child in the same way. As he still sank he threw back his face to escape the water and be able to breathe; any one who saw him in this darkness would have fancied he saw a mask floating on the gloomy waters; he vaguely perceived above him Marius's hanging head and livid face; he made a desperate effort, and advanced his foot, which struck against something solid, a resting-place. It was high time.

He drew himself up, and writhed and rooted himself with a species of fury upon this support. It produced on him the effect of the first step of a staircase reascending to life. This support met with in the mud, at the supreme moment, was the beginning of the other side of the roadway, which had fallen in without breaking, and bent under the water like a plank in a single piece. A well-constructed pavement forms a curve, and possesses such firmness. This fragment of roadway, partly submerged, but solid, was a real incline, and once upon it they were saved. Jean Valjean ascended it, and attained the other side of the slough. On leaving the water his foot caught against a stone and he fell on his knees. He found that this was just, and remained on them for some time, with his soul absorbed in words addressed to God. He rose, shivering, chilled, bent beneath the dying man he carried, dripping with filth, but with his soul full of strange brightness.

## CHAPTER CCLVI.

### THE TORN COAT-SKIRT.

HE set out once again, still, if he had not left his life in the fontis, he seemed to have left his strength there. This supreme effort had exhausted him, and his fatigue was now so great that he was obliged to rest every three or four paces, to take breath, and leant against the wall. Once he was obliged to sit down on the banquette in order to alter Ma-

rius' position, and believed that he should remain there. But if his vigor were dead his energy was not so, and he rose again. He walked desperately, almost quickly, went thus one hundred yards without raising his head, almost without breathing, and all at once ran against the wall. He had reached an elbow of the drain, and on arriving head down at the turning came against the wall. He raised his eyes, and at the end of the passage down there, far, very far away, perceived a light. But this time it was no terrible light, but white, fair light. It was daylight. Jean Valjean saw the outlet. A condemned soul that suddenly saw from the middle of the furnace the issue from Gehenna would feel what Jean Valjean felt. It would fly wildly with the stumps of its burnt wings toward the radiant gate. Jean Valjean no longer felt fatigue, he no longer felt Marius' weight, he found again his muscles of steel, and ran rather than walked. As he drew nearer, the outlet became more distinctly designed; it was an arch, not so tall as the roof, which gradually contracted, and not so wide as the gallery, which grew narrower at the same time as the roof became lowered. The tunnel finished inside in the shape of a funnel, a faulty reduction, imitated from the wickets of houses of correction, logical in a prison, but illogical in a drain, and which has since been corrected.

Jean Valjean reached the issue and then stopped; it was certainly the outlet, but they could not get out. The arch was closed by a strong grating, and this grating, which apparently rarely turned on its oxydized hinges, was fastened to the stone wall by a heavy lock, which, red with rust, seemed an enormous brick. The keyhole was visible, as well as the bolt deeply plunged into its iron box. It was one of those Bastille locks of which ancient Paris was so prodigal. Beyond the grating were the open air, the river, daylight the bank, very narrow, but sufficient to depart, the distant quays, Paris, that gulf in which a man hides himself so easily, the wide horizon, and liberty. On the right could be distinguished, down the river, the Pont de Jena, and up it the Pont des Invalides; the spot would have been a favorable one to await night and escape. It was one of the most solitary points in Paris, the bank facing the Gros-Caillou. The flies went in and out through the grating bars. It might be about

half-past eight in the evening, and day was drawing in: Jean Valjean laid Marius along the wall on the dry part of the way, then walked up to the grating and seized the bars with both hands; the shock was frenzied, but the effect *nil*. The grating did not stir. Jean Valjean seized the bars one after the other, hoping he might be able to break out the least substantial one, and employ it as a lever to lift the gate off the hinges or break the lock, but not a bar stirred. A tiger's teeth are not more solidly set in their jaws. Without a lever it was impossible to open the grating, and the obstacle was invincible.

Must he finish, then, there? what should he do? what would become of him? he had not the strength to turn back and recommence the frightful journey which he had already made. Moreover, how was he to cross again that slough from which he had only escaped by a miracle? And after the slough, was there not the police squad, which he assuredly would not escape twice; and then where should he go, and what direction take? following the slope would not lead to his object, for if he reached another outlet, he would find it obstructed by an iron plate or a grating. All the issues were indubitably closed in that way; accident had left the grating by which they entered open, but it was plain that all the other mouths of the sewer were closed. They had only succeeded in escaping into a prison.

It was all over, and all that Jean Valjean had done was useless: God opposed it. They were both caught in the dark and immense web of death, and Jean Valjean felt the fearful spider already running along the black threads in the darkness. He turned his back to the grating and fell on the pavement near Marius, who was still motionless, and whose head had fallen between his knees. There was no outlet, that was the last drop of agony. Of whom did he think in this profound despondency! Neither of himself nor of Marius! of Cosette. In the midst of his annihilation a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a low voice said:—

"Half shares."

Some one in this shadow? As nothing so resembles a dream as despair, Jean Valjean fancied that he was dreaming. He had not heard a footstep. Was it possible? He raised his eyes, and a man was standing before him. This man was dressed in a blouse, his feet

were naked, and he held his shoes in his hand; he had evidently taken them off in order to be able to reach Jean Valjean without letting his footsteps be heard, Jean Valjean had not a moment's hesitation; however unexpected the meeting might be, the man was known to him: it was Thénardier. Although, so to speak, aroused with a start, Jean Valjean, accustomed to alarms and to unexpected blows, which it is necessary to parry quickly, at once regained possession of all his presence of mind. Besides, the situation could not be worse, a certain degree of distress is not capable of any crescendo, and Thénardier himself could not add any blackness to this night. There was a moment's expectation. Thénardier, raising his right hand to the level of his forehead, made a screen of it; then he drew his eyebrows together with a wink, which, with a slight pinching of the lips, characterizes the sagacious attention of a man who is striving to recognize another. He did not succeed. Jean Valjean, as we said, was turning his back to the light, and was besides so disfigured, so filthy, and blood-stained, that he could not have been recognized in broad daylight. On the other hand, Thénardier, with his face lit up by the light from the grating, a cellar brightness, it is true, livid but precise in his lividness, leapt at once into Jean Valjean's eyes, to employ the energetic popular metaphor. This inequality of conditions sufficed to insure some advantage to Jean Valjean in the mysterious duel which was about to begin between the two situations and the two men. The meeting took place between Jean Valjean masked and Thénardier unmasked. Jean Valjean at once perceived that Thénardier did not recognize him; and they looked at each other silently in this gloom, as if taking one another's measure. Thénardier was the first to break the silence.

"How do you mean to get out?"

Jean Valjean not replying, Thénardier continued,—

"It is impossible to pick the lock: and yet you must get out of here."

"That is true," said Jean Valjean.

"Well, then, half shares."

"What do you mean?"

"You have killed the man, very good, and I have the key."

Thénardier pointed to Marius, and continued,—*"I do not know you, but you must be a friend, and I wish to help you."*

Jean Valjean began to understand. Thénardier took him for an assassin. The latter continued,—

"Listen, mate, you did not kill this man without looking to see what he had in his pockets. Give me my half and I open the gate."

And half drawing a heavy key from under his ragged blouse, he added,—

"Would you like to see how the key is made? look here."

Jean Valjean was so astounded that he doubted whether what he saw was real. It was Providence appearing in a horrible form, and the good angel issuing from the ground in the shape of Thénardier. The latter thrust his hand into a wide pocket hidden under his blouse, drew out a rope, and handed it to Jean Valjean.

"There," he said, I give you the rope in the bargain."

"What am I to do with the rope?"

"You also want a stone, but you will find that outside, as there is a heap of them."

"What am I to do with a stone?"

"Why, you ass, as you are going to throw the cove into the river you want a rope and a stone, or else the body will float on the water."

Jean Valjean took the rope mechanically, and Thénardier snapped his fingers, as if a sudden idea had occurred to him.

"Hilloh, mate, how did you manage to get through that slough? I did not dare venture into it. Peuh! you do not smell pleasant."

After a pause he added,—

"I ask you questions, but you are right not to answer: it is an apprenticeship for the magistrate's ugly quarter of an hour. And then, by not speaking at all a man runs no risk of speaking too loud. No matter, though I cannot see your face and do not know your name, you would do wrong in supposing that I do not know who you are and what you want. I know all about it: you have smashed that swell a little, and now want to get rid of him somewhere. You prefer the river, that great nonsense-hider, and I will help you out of the hobble. It is my delight to aid a good fellow when in trouble."

While commending Jean Valjean for his silence it was plain that he was trying to make him speak. He pushed his shoulder, so as to be able to see his profile, and exclaim-

ed, though without raising the pitch of his voice,—

“Talking of the slough, you are a precious ass. Why did you not throw the man into it?”

Jean Valjean preserved silence. Thénardier continued, raising his rag of a cravat to the Adam's apple, a gesture which completes the capable air of a serious man.

“Really, you may have acted sensibly, for the workmen who went to-morrow to stop up the hole would certainly have found the swell, and your trail would be followed up. Some one has passed through the sewer; who? how did he get out? was he seen to do so? The police are full of sense: the drain is a traitor, and denounces you. Such a find is a rarity, it attracts attention, for few people employ the sewer for their little business, while the river belongs to everybody, and is the real grave. At the end of a month your man is fished up at the nets of St. Cloud: well, who troubles himself about that? it's cold meat, that's all. Who killed the man? Paris, and justice makes no inquiries. You acted wisely.”

The more loquacious Thénardier became, the more silent Jean Valjean was. Thénardier shook his shoulder again.

“And now let's settle our business. You have seen my key, so show me your money.”

Thénardier was haggard, firm, slightly menacing, but remarkably friendly. There was one strange fact: Thénardier's manner was not simple; he did not appear entirely at his ease: while not affecting any mysterious air, he spoke in a low voice. From time to time he laid his finger on his lip, and muttered “Chut” it was difficult to guess why, for there were only themselves present. Jean Valjean thought that other bandits were probably hidden in some corner no great distance off, and that Thénardier was not anxious to share with them. The latter continued,—

“Now for a finish. How much had the swell about him?”

Jean Valjean felt in his pockets. It was, as will be remembered, always his rule to have money about him, for the gloomy life of expedients to which he was condemned rendered it a law for him. This time, however, he was unprovided. In putting on upon the previous evening his national guard uniform, he forgot, mournfully absorbed as he was, to

take out his pocketbook, and he had only some change in his waistcoat-pocket. He turned out his pocket, which was saturated with slime, and laid on the banquette a louis d'or, two five-franc pieces, and five or six double sous. Thénardier thrust out his lower lip with a significant twist of the neck.

“You did not kill him for much,” he said.

He began most familiarly feeling in Jean Valjean and Marius' pockets, and Jean Valjean, who was most anxious to keep his back to the light, allowed him to do so. While feeling in Marius' coat, Thénardier, with the dexterity of a conjurer, managed to tear off, without Jean Valjean perceiving the fact, a strip, which he concealed under his blouse; probably thinking that this piece of cloth might help him to recognize hereafter the assassinated man and the assassin. However, he found no more than the thirty francs.

“It is true,” he said, “one with the other, you have no more than that.”

And forgetting his phrase half-shares, he took all. He hesitated a little at the double sous, but on reflection he took them too, while grumbling, “I don't care, it is killing people too cheaply.”

This done, he again took the key from under his blouse.

“Now, my friend, you must be off. It is here as at the fairs; you pay when you go out. You have paid, so you can go.”

And he began laughing. We may be permitted to doubt whether he had the pure and disinterested intention of saving an assassin, when he gave a stranger the help of this key, and allowed any one but himself to pass through this gate. Thénardier helped Jean Valjean to replace Marius on his back, and then proceeded to the grating on the tips of his naked feet. After making Jean Valjean a sign to follow him, he placed his finger on his lip, and remained for some seconds as if in suspense; but when the inspection was over he put the key in the lock. The bolt slid, and the gate turned on its hinges without grinding or creaking. It was plain that this grating and these hinges, carefully oiled, opened more frequently than might be supposed. This gentleness was ill-omened; it spoke of furtive comings and goings, of the mysterious entrances and exits of night-men, and the crafty foot-fall of crime. The sewer was evidently an accomplice of some dark band, and this taciturn grating was a receiver. Thén-

ardier held the door ajar, left just room for Jean Valjean to pass, relocked the gate, and plunged back into the darkness, making no more noise than a breath; he seemed to walk with the velvety pads of a tiger. A moment later this hideous providence had disappeared, and Jean Valjean was outside.

## CHAPTER CCLVII.

### MARIUS APPEARS DEAD TO A CONNOISSEUR.

HE let Marius slip down on to the bank. They were outside; the miasmas, the darkness, the horror, were behind him; the healthy, pure, living, joyous, freely respirable air inundated him. All around him was silence, but it was the charming silence of the sun setting in the full azure. Twilight was passing, and night, the great liberator, the friend of all those who need a cloak of darkness to escape from an agony, was at hand. The sky offered itself on all sides like an enormous calm, and the river rippled up to his feet with the sound of a kiss. The aerial dialogue of the nests bidding each other good-night in the elms of the Champ Élysées was audible. A few stars, faintly studding the pale blue of the zenith, formed in the immensity little imperceptible flashes. Night unfolded over Jean Valjean's head all the sweetness of infinitude. It was the undecided and exquisite hour which says neither yes nor no. There was already sufficient night for a man to lose himself in it a short distance off, and yet sufficient daylight to recognize any one close by. Jean Valjean was for a few seconds irresistibly overcome by all this august and caressing serenity. There are minutes of oblivion in which suffering gives up harassing the wretch; all is eclipsed in the thought; peace covers the dreamer like a light, and under the gleaming twilight the soul shines in imitation of the sky which is becoming illumined. Jean Valjean could not refrain from contemplating the vast clear obscure which he had above him, and pensively took a bath of ecstasy and prayer in the majestic silence of the eternal heavens. Then, as if the feeling of duty returned to him, he eagerly bent down over Marius, and lifting some water in the hollow of his hand, softly threw a few drops into his face. Marius' eyelids did not move, but he still breathed through his parted lips. Jean Valjean was again about

to plunge his hand into the river, when he suddenly felt some annoyance, as when we feel there is some one behind us though we cannot see him. He turned round, and there was really some one behind him, as there had been just before.

A man of tall stature, dressed in a long coat, with folded arms, and carrying in his right hand a cudgel, whose leaden knob could be seen, was standing a few paces behind Jean Valjean, who was leaning over Marius. It was with the help of the darkness a species of apparition; a simple man would have been frightened at it owing to the twilight, and a thoughtful one on account of the bludgeon. Jean Valjean recognized Javert. The reader has doubtless guessed that the tracker of Thénardier was no other than Javert. Javert after his unhoped-for escape from the barricade, went to the prefecture of police, made a verbal report to the prefect in person in a short audience, and then immediately returned to duty, which implied—the note found on him will be remembered—a certain surveillance of the right bank of the river at the Champs Élysées, which had for some time past attracted the attention of the police. There he perceived Thénardier and followed him. The rest is known.

It will be also understood that the grating so obligingly opened for Jean Valjean was a clever trick on the part of Thénardier. He felt that Javert was still there; the watched man has a scent which never deceives him; and it was necessary to throw a bone to this grayhound. An assassin, what a chance! he could not let it slip. Thénardier, on putting Jean Valjean outside in his place, offered a prey to the policeman, made him loose his hold, caused himself to be forgotten in a greater adventure, recompensed Javert for his loss of time, which always flutters a spy, gained thirty francs, and fully intended for his own part to escape by the help of this diversion.

Jean Valjean had passed from one rock to another; these two meetings one upon the other, falling from Thénardier on Javert, were rude. Javert did not recognize Jean Valjean, who, as we have said, no longer resembled himself. He did not unfold his arms, but secured his grasp of his bludgeon by an imperceptible movement, and said, in a sharp, calm voice,—

“Who are you?”

"Myself."

"What do you mean?"

"I am Jean Valjean."

Javert placed his cudgel between his teeth, bent his knees, bowed his back, laid his two powerful hands on Jean Valjean's shoulders, which they held as in two vices, examined and recognized him. Their faces almost touched, and Javert's glance was terrific. Jean Valjean remained inert under Javert's gripe, like a lion enduring the claw of a lynx.

"Inspector Javert," he said, "you have me. Besides, since this morning I have considered myself your prisoner. I did not give you my address in order to try and escape you. Take me, but grant me one thing."

Javert did not seem to hear, but kept his eyeballs fixed on Jean Valjean. His wrinkled chin thrust up his lips towards his nose, a sign of stern reverie. At length he loosed his hold of Jean Valjean, drew himself up, clutched his cudgel, and, as if in a dream, muttered rather than asked this question,—

"What are you doing here? and who is that man?"

Jean Valjean replied, and the sound of his voice seemed to awaken Javert,—

"It is of him that I wished to speak. Do with me as you please, but help me first to carry him home. I only ask this of you."

Javert's face was contracted in the same way as it always was when any one believed him capable of a concession; still he did not say no. He stooped again, took from his pocket a handkerchief, which he dipped in the water, and wiped Marius' ensanguined forehead.

"This man was at the barricade," he said in a low voice, as if speaking to himself; he was the one whom they called Marius."

He was a first-class spy, who had observed everything, and picked up everything when he believed himself a dead man; who even spied in his death agony, and, standing on the first step of the sepulchre, took notes. He seized Marius' hand, and felt his pulse.

"He is wounded," said Jean Valjean.

"He is a dead man," said Javert.

Jean Valjean replied,—

"No; not yet."

"Then you brought him from the barricade here. Javert observed.

His preoccupation must have been great for him not to dwell on this alarming escape

through the sewers, and not even remark Jean Valjean's silence after his question. Jean Valjean on his side, seemed to have a sole thought; he continued,—

"He lives in the Marais, in the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, with his grandfather. I do not know his name."

Jean Valjean felt in Marius' pocket, took out the portfolio, opened it at the page which Marius had written in pencil, and offered it to Javert. There was still sufficient floating light in the air to be able to read, and Javert, besides, had in his eyes the feline phosphorescence of night birds. He deciphered the few lines written by Marius, and growled, "Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire." Then he cried, "Driver!"

Our readers will remember the coachman waiting above in case of need. A moment after the hackney, which came down the incline leading to the watering-place was on the bank. Marius was deposited on the back seat, and Javert sat down by Jean Valjean's side on the front one. When the door was closed the fiacre started off rapidly along the quays in the direction of the Bastille. They quitted the quay and turned into the streets; and the driver, a black outline on his seat, lashed his lean horses. There was an icy silence in the hackney-coach; Marius motionless, with his body reclining in one corner, his head on his chest, his arms pendant, and his legs stiff, appeared to be only waiting for a coffin; Jean Valjean seemed made of gloom, and Javert of stone; and in this fiacre full of night, whose interior, each time that it passed a lamp, seemed to be vividly lit up, as if by an intermittent flash, accident united and appeared to confront the three immobilities of tragedy,—the corpse, the spectre, and the statue.

## CHAPTER CCLVIII.

### RETURN OF THE SON PRODIGAL OF HIS LIFE.

At each jolt over the pavement a drop of blood fell from Marius' hair. It was quite night when the hackney-coach reached No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire. Javert got out first, examined at a glance the number over the gateway, and raising the heavy knocker of hammered steel, stamped in the old style with a goat and a satyr contending, gave a violent knock. The folding-door opened slightly, and Javert pushed it open.

The porter half-showed himself, yawning, and scarce awake, candle in hand. All were asleep in the house, for people go to bed early at Marais, especially on days of rioting. This good old district, terrified by the revolution, takes refuge in sleep, like children who, when they hear old Boguey coming, quickly hide their heads under the counterpane. In the meanwhile Jean Valjean and the driver removed Marius from the hackney-coach, Valjean holding him under the armpits and the coachman under the knees. While carrying Marius in this way Jean Valjean passed his hands under his clothes, which were terribly torn, felt his chest, and assured himself that his heart still beat. It even beat a little less feebly, as if the motion of the vehicle had produced a certain return of life. Javert addressed the porter in the tone which becomes the government in the presence of the porter of a factious man.

"Any one live here of the name of Gillenormand?"

"It is here. What do you want with him?"

"We have brought home his son."

"His son?" the porter asked in amazement.

"He is dead."

Jean Valjean, who arrived ragged and filthy behind Javert, and whom the porter regarded with some horror, made him a sign that it was not so. The porter seemed neither to understand Javert's remark nor Jean Valjean's nod. Javert continued,—

"He has been to the barricade, and here he is."

"To the barricade!" the porter exclaimed.

"He has been killed. Go and wake his father."

The porter did not stir.

"Be off!" Javert continued, and added, "There will be a funeral here to-morrow."

For Javert, the ordinary incidents of the streets were classified categorically, which is the commencement of foresight and surveillance, and each eventuality had its compartment; the possible facts were to some extent kept in drawers, whence they issued on occasions, in variable quantities; there were in the streets, disturbance, riot, carnival, and interments.

The porter limited himself to awaking Basque; Basque awoke Nicolette; Nicolette awoke Aunt Gillenormand. As for the grand-

father he was left to sleep, as it was thought that he would know the affair quite soon enough as it was. Marius was carried to the first floor, no one being acquainted with the fact in the rest of the house, and he was laid on an old sofa in M. Gillenormand's ante-room, and, while Basque went to fetch a physician and Nicolette opened the linen presses, Jean Valjean felt Javert touch his shoulder. He understood, and went down, Javert following close at his heels. The porter saw them depart, as he had seen them arrive, with a startled sleepiness. They got into the hackney-coach, and the driver on his box.

"Inspector Javert," Jean Valjean said, "grant me one thing more."

"What is it?" Javert answered roughly.

"Let me go home for a moment, and you can then do with me what you please."

Javert remained silent for a few moments with his chin thrust into the collar of his great-coat, and then let down the front window.

"Driver," he said, "No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

They did not speak during the entire ride. What did Jean Valjean want? to finish what he had begun; to warn Cosette, tell her where Marius was, give her perhaps some other useful information, and make if he could, certain final arrangements. For his own part, as regarded what concerned him personally, it was all over; he had been arrested by Javert, and did not resist. Any other than he, in such a situation, would perhaps have vaguely thought of the rope which Thénardier had given him, and the bars of the first cell he entered; but since his meeting with the bishop Jean Valjean had within him a profound religious hesitation against every assault, even on himself. Suicide, that mysterious attack on the unknown, which may contain to a certain extent the death of the soul, was impossible to Jean Valjean.

On entering the Rue de l'Homme Armé the coach stopped, as the street was too narrow for vehicles to pass along it. Jean Valjean and Javert got out. The driver humbly represented to "Mr. Inspector" that the Utrecht velvet of his coach was quite spoilt by the blood of the assassinated man and the filth of the assassin—that is how he understood the affair, and he added that an indemnity was due to him. At the same time taking his license-book from his pocket,



he begged Mr. Inspector to have the kindness to write him a little bit of a certificate. Javert thrust back the book which the driver offered him and said,—

“How much do you want, including the time you waited and the journey?”

“It’s seven hours and a quarter,” the driver answered, “and my velvet was bran new. Eighty francs, Mr. Inspector.”

Javert took from his pocket four Napoleons, and dismissed the hackney-coach. Jean Valjean thought that it was Javert’s intention to take him on foot to the Blancs Manteaux post, or that of the Archives, which were close by. They entered the street, which was as usual deserted. Javert followed Jean Valjean and, on reaching No. 7, the latter rapped, and the gate opened.

“Very good,” said Javert, “go up.”

He added, with a strange expression, and as if making an effort to speak as he was doing,—

“I will wait for you here.”

Jean Valjean looked at Javert, for this style of conduct was not at all a habit of Javert’s. Still it could not surprise him greatly that Javert should now place in him a sort of haughty confidence, the confidence of the cat which grants the mouse liberty to the length of its claw. He thrust open the gate, entered the house, shouted to the porter, who was in bed, and had pulled the string in that posture, “It is I,” and mounted the staircase. On reaching the first story he paused, for every *Via dolorosa* has its stations. The window was open, and as is the case in many old houses, the staircase obtained light from, and looked out on, the street. The street lantern, situated precisely opposite, threw some little light on the stairs, which caused a saving of a lamp. Jean Valjean, either to breathe or mechanically, thrust his head out of this window and looked down into the street. It is short, and the lamp lit it from one end to the other. Jean Valjean had a bedazzlement of stupor; there was no one in it.

Javert had gone away.

## CHAPTER CCLIX.

### THE GRANDFATHER.

BASQUE and the porter had carried Marius, who was still lying motionless on the sofa on

which he had been laid on arriving, into the drawing-room. The physician, who had been sent for, hurried in, and Aunt Gillenormand had risen. Aunt Gillenormand came and went, horrified, clasping her hands, and incapable of doing anything but saying, “Can it be possible?” She added at intervals, “Everything will be stained with blood.” When the first horror had passed away a certain philosophy of the situation appeared even in her mind, and was translated by the exclamation, “It must end in that way.” She did not go so far, though, “*Did I not say so?*” which is usual on occasions of this nature.

By the surgeon’s orders a tester-bed was put up near the sofa. He examined Marius, and after satisfying himself that the pulse still beat, that the patient had no penetrating wound in the chest, and that the blood at the corners of the lips came from the nostrils, he had him laid flat on the bed, without a pillow, the head level with the body, and even a little lower, and with naked bust, in order to facilitate the breathing. Mademoiselle Gillenormand, seeing that Marius was being undressed, withdrew, and told her beads in her bed-room. The body had received no internal injury; a ball, deadened by the pocket-book, had deviated, and passed round the ribs with a frightful gash, but as it was not deep it was, therefore, not dangerous. The long subterranean march had completed the dislocation of the collar-bone, and there were serious injuries there. The arms were covered with sabre-cuts: no scar disfigured the face, but the head was cut all over with gashes: what would be the state of these wounds on the head? did they stop at the scalp or did they reach the brain? it was impossible to say yet. It was a serious symptom that they had caused the faintness. And men do not always awake from such fainting fits; the hemorrhage, moreover, had exhausted the wounded man. From the waist downward the lower part of the body had been protected by the barricade.

Basque and Nicolette tore up linen and prepared bandages: Nicolette sewed them and Basque rolled them. As they had no lint, the physician had temporarily checked the effusion of blood with cakes of wadding. By the side of the bed three candles burned on the table on which the surgeon’s pocket-book lay open. He washed Marius’ face and





AT EACH JOLT OVER THE PAVEMENT A DROP OF BLOOD FELL FROM MARIUS' HAIR.

Hugo, vol. III., p. 150.

hair with cold water, and a bucketful was red in an instant. The porter, candle in hand, lighted him. The surgeon seemed to be thinking sadly: from time to time, he gave a negative shake of the head, as if answering some question which he mentally addressed to himself. Such mysterious dialogues of the physician with himself are a bad sign for the patient. At the moment when the surgeon was wiping the face and gently touching with his finger the still closed eyelids, a door opened at the end of the room, and a tall, pale figure appeared,—it was the grandfather. The riot during the last two days had greatly agitated, offended, and occupied M. Gillenormand; he had not been able to sleep on the previous night, and he had been feverish all day. At night he went to bed at a very early hour, bidding his people bar up the house, and had fallen asleep through weariness.

Old men have a fragile sleep. M. Gillenormand's bedroom joined the drawing-room, and whatever precautions had been taken, the noise awoke him. Surprised by the crack of light which he saw in his door, he had got out of bed, and groped his way to the door. He was standing on the threshold, with one hand on the handle, his head slightly bent forward, and shaking, his body enfolded in a white dressing-gown, as straight and creaseless as a winding-sheet: he was surprised, and looked like a ghost peering into a tomb. He noticed the bed, and on the mattress this young bleeding man, of the whiteness of snow, with closed eyes, open mouth, livid cheeks, naked to the waist, marked all over with vermillion, wounded, motionless, and brightly illuminated.

The grandfather had from head to foot that shudder which ossified limbs can have. His eyes, whose cornea was yellow owing to their great age, were veiled by a sort of glassy stare; his entire face assumed in an instant the earthy angles of a skeleton's head; his arms fell pendant as if a spring had been broken in them, and his stupor was displayed by the outspreading of all the fingers of his two old trembling hands. His knees formed a salient angle, displaying through the opening of his dressing-gown his poor naked legs bristling with white hairs, and he murmured,—

“Marius!”

“He has just been brought here, sir,”

said Basque; “he went to the barricade, and—”

“He is dead,” the old gentleman exclaimed in a terrible voice. “Oh! the brigand!”

Then, a sort of sepulchral transfiguration drew up this centenarian as straight as a young man.

“You are the surgeon, sir,” he said, “begin by telling me one thing. He is dead, is he not?”

The surgeon, who was frightfully anxious, maintained silence, and M. Gillenormand writhed his hands with a burst of terrifying laughter.

“He is dead, he is dead! he has let himself be killed at the barricade through hatred of me; it was against me that he did it! ah, the blood-drinker, that is the way in which he returns to me. Woe of my life, he is dead!”

He went to a window, opened it quite wide, as if he were stifling, and standing there began speaking to the night in the street.

“Stabbed, sabred, massacred, exterminated, slashed, cut to pieces! Do you see that, the beggar! he knew very well that I expected him, and that I had his room ready, and that I had placed at my bed-head his portrait when he was a child! He knew very well that he need only return, and that for years I had been recalling him, and that I sat at night by my fireside with my hands on my knees, not knowing what to do, and that I was crazy about him! You knew that very well, you had only to return and say, ‘It is I,’ and you would be master of the house, and I would obey you, and you could do anything you liked with your old ass of a grandfather! You knew it very well, and said,—‘No, he is a royalist, I will not go!’ and you went to the barricades, and have let yourself be killed out of spite! in order to revenge yourself for what I said on the subject of Monsieur le Duc de Berry! Is not that infamous! Go to bed and sleep quietly, for he is dead. This is my awakening.”

The surgeon, who was beginning to be anxious for both, left Marius, and, going up to Gillenormand, took his arm. The grandfather turned, looked at him with eyes that seemed dilated and blood-shot, and said calmly,—

“I thank you sir, I am calm. I am a man. I saw the death of Louis XVI., and can en-

dures events. There is one thing that is terrible, it is the thought that it is your newspapers which do all the mischief. You have scribblers, speakers, lawyers, orators, tribunes discussions, progress, lights, rights of man, liberty of the press, and that is the way in which your children are brought back to your houses. Oh, Marius, it is abominable! killed! dead before me! a barricade! oh, the bandit! Doctor, you live in the quarter, I believe? Oh yes, I know you well. I see your cab pass from my window. Well, I will tell you. You would do wrong to believe that I am in a passion, for people do not get in a passion with a dead man, that would be stupid. That is a boy I brought up; I was old when he was still quite little. He played in the Tuileries with his little spade and his little chair, and, in order that the inspectors should not scold, I used to fill up with my cane, the holes which he made with his spade. One day he cried. 'Down with Louis XVIII.' and went off. It is not my fault. He was all pink and white, and his mother is dead; have you noticed that all little children are light-haired? Supposing that he is a son of one of those brigands of the Loire, children are innocent of their fathers' crimes. I remember him when he was so high, and he could never manage to pronounce a *d*. He spoke so sweetly and incomprehensibly, that you might have fancied him a bird. I remember one day that a circle was formed in front of the Farnese Hercules to admire that child for he was so lovely. He had a head such as you see in pictures. I used to speak loud to him, and threaten him with my cane, but he knew very well that it was a joke. In the morning, when he entered my room, I scolded, but it produced the effect of sunshine upon me. It is not possible to defend yourself against these brats, for they take you, and hold you, and do not let you go again. It is the fact that there never was a Cupid like that child, and now, what do you say of your Lafayette, your Benjamin Constant, and your Pirecuir de Corcelles, who kill him for me? oh, it cannot pass like that."

He went up to Marius, who was still livid, motionless, and began wringing his arms again. The old gentleman's lips moved as it were mechanically, and allowed indistinct sentences to pass, which were scarce audible. "Ah, heartless! ah, clubbist! ah, scoundrel! ah, Septemberer!" reproaches uttered in a

low voice by a dying man to a corpse. By degrees, as such internal eruptions must always burst forth, the flood of words returned, but the grandfather seemed no longer to have the strength to utter them; his voice was so hollow and choked, that it seemed to come from the other side of an abyss.

"I do not care a bit, I will die too. And then to think there is not a she-devil in Paris who would not be happy to produce the happiness of that scoundrel! a scamp, who, instead of amusing himself and enjoying life, went to fight, and let himself be shot like a brute! and for whom, and for what? for the republic! instead of going to dance at the Chaumiere, as is the duty of young men. It is really worth being twenty years of age. The republic, a fine absurdity! Poor mothers bring pretty boys into the world for that! Well, he is dead, that will make two hearses under the gateway. So you have got yourself served in that way for General Lamarque! what did General Lamarque do for you? a sabrer! a chatterer! to get one's self killed for a dead man! is it not enough to drive one mad? Can you understand that? at twenty and without turning his head to see whether he left any thing behind him! Now, see the poor old fellows who are obliged to die all alone; rot in your corner, owl! Well, after all, that is what I hoped for, and is for the best, as it will kill me right off. I am too old, I am one hundred, I am a hundred thousand, and I had a right to be dead long ago. Well, this blow settles it: it is all over, what happiness! what is the use of making him inhale ammonia and all that pile of drugs? you ass of a doctor, you are wasting your time. There, he's dead, quite dead. I know it, for I am dead too. He did not do the thing by halves. Yes, the present age is infamous, infamous, infamous, and that is what I think of you, your ideas, you systems, your masters, your oracles, your doctors, your scamps of writers, your rogues of philosophers, and all the revolutions which have startled the Tuileries' tавens during the last sixty years. And since you were pitiless in letting yourself be killed so, I will not even feel sorry at your death; do you hear, assassin!"

At this moment Marius slowly opened his eyes, and his glance still veiled by lethargic surprise, settled on M. Gillenormand.

"Marius!" the old man cried, "Marius,

my little Marius! my child! my beloved son! you open your eyes! you look at me! you are alive! thanks!"

And he fell down in a fainting fit.

## CHAPTER CCLX.

### THE END OF JAVERT.

JAVERT retired slowly from the Rue de l'Homme Arme. He walked with drooping head for the first time in his life, and equally for the first time in his life with his hands behind his back. Up to that day Javert had only assumed, of Napoleon's two attitudes, the one which expresses resolution, the arms folded on the chest; the one indicating uncertainty, the arms behind the back, was unknown to him. Now a change had taken place, and his whole person, slow and sombre was stamped with anxiety. He buried himself in the silent streets, but followed a certain direction; he went by the shortest road to the Seine, reached the Quai des Ormes walked along it, passed the Grève, and stopped, a little distance from the Chatelet Square, at the corner of the Pont Notre Dame. The Seine makes there between that bridge and the Pont au Change on one side, and the Quai de la Megisserie and the Quai aux Fleurs on the other, a species of square lake traversed by a rapid. This point of the Seine is feared by sailors; nothing can be more dangerous than this rapid, which was contracted at that period, and irritated by the stakes of the mill bridge, since demolished. The two bridges, so close to each other heighten the danger, for the water hurries formidably through the arches. Men who fall in there, do not reappear, and the best swimmers are drowned.

Javert leant his elbows on the parapet, his chin on his hand, and while his hands mechanically closed on his thick whiskers, he reflected. A novelty, a revolution, a catastrophe had just taken place within him, and he must examine into it. Javert was suffering horribly, and for some hours past Javert had ceased to be simple. He was troubled; this brain so limped in its blindness, had lost its transparency, and there was a cloud in this crystal. Javert felt in his conscience duty doubled, and he could not hide the fact from himself. When he met Jean Valjean so unexpectedly on the Seine bank, he had something within him of the wolf that recaptures

its prey and the dog that finds its master again. He saw before him two roads, both equally straight, but he saw two of them, and this terrified him, as he had never known in his life but one straight line. And, poignant agony, these two roads were contrary, and one of these right lines excluded the other. Which of the two was the true one? His situation was indescribable: to owe his life to a malefactor, to accept this debt and repay him; to be, in spite of himself, on the same footing with an escaped convict, and requite one service with another service; to let it be said to him, Be off, and say in his turn, Be free; to sacrifice to personal motives duty, that general obligation, and to feel in these personal motives something general too, and perhaps superior; to betray society in order to remain faithful to his conscience—that all these absurdities should be realized, and accumulated upon him, was what startled him. One thing had astonished him, that Jean Valjean had shown him mercy, and one thing had petrified him, that he, Javert, had shown mercy to Jean Valjean.

Where was he? he sought and no longer found himself. What was he to do now? to give up Jean Valjean was bad, to leave Jean Valjean at liberty was bad. In the former case, the man of authority fell lower than the man of the galleys; in the second, a convict rose higher than the law, and set his foot upon it. In either case, dishonor for him, Javert. Whatever resolution he might form, there was a fall, for destiny has certain extremities projecting over the impossible, beyond which life is only a precipice. Javert had reached one of these extremities; one of his anxieties was to be constrained to think, and the very violence of all these contradictory emotions compelled him to do so. Now thought was an unusual thing for him, and singularly painful. There is always in thought a certain amount of internal rebellion, and he was irritated at having that within him. Thought, no matter on what subject beyond the narrow circle of his destiny, would have been to him in any case useless and wearisome, but thinking about the day which had just passed was a torture. And yet he must after such shocks look into his conscience, and give himself an account of himself. What he had done caused him to shudder; he, Javert, had thought fit to decide against all police regulations, against all

social and judicial organization, and against the entire codes, a setting at liberty: that had suited him. He had substituted his own affairs for public affairs, was not that unjustifiable? Each time that he stood facing the nameless action which he had committed, he trembled from head to foot. What should he resolve on? Only one resort was left him, to return at full speed to the Rue de l'Homme Armé, and lock up Jean Valjean. It was clear that this was what he ought to do, but he could not do it. Something barred the way on that side. What! is there anything in the world besides sentences, the police and the authorities? Javert was overwhelmed.

A sacred galley-slave! a convict impregnable by justice, and that through the deed of Javert! Was it not frightful that Javert and Jean Valjean, the man made to punish and the man made to endure, that these two men who were both the property of the law, should have reached the point of placing themselves both above the law? What! such enormities could happen and no one be punished? Jean Valjean, stronger than the whole social order, would be free, and he, Javert, would continue to eat the bread of the government! His reverie gradually became terrible: he might through this reverie have reproached himself slightly on the subject of the insurgent carried home to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, but he did not think of it. The slighter fault was lost in the greater, and, beside, this insurgent was evidently a dead man, and, legally, death checks prosecution. Jean Valjean,—that was the weight which he had on his mind; and he disconcerted him. All the axioms which had been the support of his whole life crumbled away before this man, and the generosity of Jean Valjean to him, Javert, overwhelmed him. Other facts which he remembered, and which he had formerly treated as falsehoods and folly, now returned to his mind as realities. M. Madeleine reappeared behind Jean Valjean, and the two figures were blended into one, which was venerable. Javert felt that something horrible, admiration for a convict, was entering his soul. Respect for a galley-slave, is it possible? he shuddered at it, and could not escape from it, although he struggled! he was reduced to confess in his soul the sublimity of this villain, and this was odious. A benevolent malefactor, a compassionate, gentle, helping and merciful convict, repaying good

for evil, pardon for hatred, preferring pity to hatred, ready to destroy himself sooner than his enemy, saving the man who had struck him, kneeling on the pinnacle of virtue, and nearer to the angels than to man. Javert was constrained to confess to himself that such a monster existed.

This could not last. Assuredly—and we lay stress on the fact—he had not yielded without resistance to this monster, to this infamous angel, to this hideous hero, at whom he felt almost as indignant as stupefied. Twenty times, while in that hackney-coach face to face with Jean Valjean, the legal tiger had roared within him. Twenty times he had felt tempted to hurl himself on Jean Valjean, to seize and devour him, that is to say, arrest him. What more simple, in fact! shout to the nearest post before which he passed,—“Here is a convict who has broken his ban!” and then go away, leave the condemned man there, be ignorant of the rest, and interfere no further. This man is eternally the prisoner of the law, and the law will do what it pleases with him, What was fairer! Javert had said all this to himself, he had wished to pass sentence, act, apprehend the man, and then, as now, had been unable, and each time that his hand was convulsively raised to Jean Valjean's collar, it fell back as if under an enormous weight, and he heard in the bottom of his heart a voice, a strange voice, crying to him, “That is well. Give up your saviour, then send for Pontius Pilate's basin, and wash your hands in it!”

Then his thoughts reverted to himself, and by the side of Jean Valjean aggrandized he saw himself degraded. A convict was his benefactor, but why had he allowed that man to let him live? he had the right of being killed at that barricade, and should have employed that right. It would have been better to call the other insurgents to his aid against Jean Valjean and have himself shot by force. His supreme agony was the disappearance of certainty, and he felt himself uprooted. The code was now only a stump in his hand, and he had to deal with scruples of an unknown species. There was within him a sentimental revelation entirely distinct from the legal affirmation, his sole measure hitherto, and it was not sufficient to remain in his old honesty. A whole order of unexpected facts arose and subjugated him, an entire new world appeared to his soul; benefits accepted

and returned, devotion, mercy, indulgence, violence done by pity to austerity, no more definitive condemnation, no more damnation, the possibility of a tear in the eye of the law, and perhaps some justice according to God acting in an inverse ratio to justice according to man. He perceived in the darkness the rising of an unknown moral sun, and he was horrified and dazzled. He was an owl forced to look like the eagle.

He said to himself that it was true, then, that there were exceptions, that authority might be disconcerted, that the rule might fall short in the presence of a fact, that every thing was not contained in the text of a code, that the unforeseen made itself obeyed, that the virtue of a convict might set a snare for the virtue of a functionary, that the monstrous might be divine, that destiny had such ambuscades, and he thought with despair that he had himself not been protected from a surprise. He was compelled to recognize that goodness existed; this galley-slave had been good, and he, too, extraordinary to say, had been good also. Hence he was becoming depraved. He felt that he was a coward, and it horrified him. The ideal for Javert was not to be human, grand, or sublime, it was to be irreproachable, and now he had broken down. How had he reached this stage? how had all this happened? he could not have told himself. He took his head between his hands, but whatever he might do, he could not succeed in explaining it. He certainly had had the intention of delivering Jean Valjean over to the law, of which Jean Valjean was the captive and of which he was the slave. He had not confessed to himself for a single instant, while he held him, that he had a thought of letting him go: it was to some extent unconsciously that his hand had opened and allowed him to escape.

All sorts of enigmatic novelties passed before his eyes. He asked himself questions, and gave himself answers, and his answers terrified him. He asked himself. "What has this convict, this desperate man, whom I followed to persecution, and who had me under his heel, and could have avenged himself, and ought to have acted so, both for his rancor and his security, done in leaving me my life, and showing me mercy? his duty? no, something more. And what have I done in showing him mercy in my turn? my duty? no, something more. Is there, then, some-

thing more than duty?" Here he was terrified, he was thrown off his balance, one of the scales fell into the abyss, the other ascended to heaven; and Javert felt no less horror at the one above than at the one below. Without being the least in the world what is termed a Voltairian, or philosopher, or incredulous man, respectful, on the contrary, instinctively to the Established Church, he only knew it as an august fragment of the social *ensemble*; order was his dogma, and sufficient for him. Since he had attained man's age and office, he had set nearly all his religion in the police, being—and we employ the words without the slightest irony, and in their most serious acceptation,—being, as we have said, a spy as another man is a priest. He had a superior, M. Gisquet, but he had never thought up to this day of that other superior, God. He felt the presence of this new Chief unexpectedly, and was troubled by Him. He was thrown out of gear by this person; he knew not what to do with this Superior, for he was not ignorant that the subordinate is bound always to bow the head, that he must neither disobey, nor blame, nor discuss, and that when facing a superior who astonishes him too much, the inferior has no other resource but his resignation. But how could he manage to give in his resignation to God?

However this might be, one fact to which he constantly returned, and which ruled everything else, was that he had just committed a frightful infraction of the law. He had closed his eyes to a relapsed convict who had broken his ban; he had set a galley-slave at liberty. He had stolen from the laws a man who belonged to them. He had done this, and no longer understood himself. He was not certain of being himself. The very reasons of his deed escaped him, and he only felt the dizziness it produced. He had lived up to this moment in that blind faith which engenders a dark probity; and this faith was leaving him, this probity had failed him. All that he had believed was dissipated, and truths which he would not have, inexorably besieged him. He must henceforth be another man, and he suffered the strange pain of a conscience suddenly operated on for cataract. He saw what it was repulsive to him to see, and felt himself spent, useless, dislocated from his past life, discharged and dissolved. Authority was dead within him, and he no



longer had a reason for living. Terrible situation! to feel affected. To be made of granite, and doubt! to be the statue of punishment cast all of one piece in the mould of the law, and to suddenly perceive that you have under your bronze bosom something absurd and disobedient, which almost resembles a heart! to have requited good for good, though you have said to yourself up to this day that such good is evil! to be the watchdog and fawn! to be ice and melt! to be a pair of pincers, and become a hand! suddenly to feel your fingers opening! to lose your hold. Oh! what a frightful thing! The man projectile, no longer knowing his road, and recoiling! to be obliged to confess this; infallibility is not infallible; there may be an error in the dogma, all is not said when a code has spoken, society is not perfect, authority is complicated with vacillation, a crack in the immutable is possible, judges are men, the law may be deceived, the courts may make a mistake! to see a flaw in the immense blue pane of the firmament.

What was taking place in Javert was the Fampoux of a rectilinear conscience, the overthrow of a mind, the crushing of a probity irresistibly hurled in a straight line, and breaking itself against God. It was certainly strange that the stoker of order, the mechanic of authority, mounted on the blind iron horse could be unsaddled by a beam of light! that the incommutable, the direct, the correct, the geometrical, the passive, the perfect, could bend; that there should be for a locomotive a road to Damascus! God, ever within man, and Himself the true conscience, refractory to the false conscience; the spark forbidden to expire, the ray ordered to remember the sun, the mind enjoined to recognize the true absolute when it confronts itself with the fictitious absolute, a humanity that cannot be lost; the human heart inadmissible—did Javert comprehend this splendid phenomenon, the most glorious, perhaps, of our internal prodigies? did he penetrate it? did he explain it to himself? Evidently no. But under the pressure of this incomprehensible incontestability he felt his brain cracking. He was less transfigured than the victim of this prodigy: he endured it with exasperation, and only saw in all this an immense difficulty of living. It seemed to him as if henceforth his breathing was eternally impeded. He was not accustomed

to have any thing unknown over his head, hitherto everything he had above him had been to his eye a clear, simple, limpid surface; there was nothing unknown or obscure; nothing but what was definite, coördinated, enchained, precise, exact, circumscribed, limited, and closed; everything foreseen, authority was a flat surface, there was no fall in it, or dizziness before it. Javert had never seen anything unknown except below him. Irregularity, unexpected things, the disorderly opening of the chaos, and a possible fall over a precipice, all this was the fact of the lower regions, of the rebels, the wicked and the wretched. How Javert threw himself back, and was suddenly startled by this extraordinary apparition,—a gulf above him!

What then! the world was dismantled from top to bottom and absolutely disconcerted! in what could men trust, when what they felt convinced of was crumbling away! What! the flaw in the cuirass of society could be formed by a magnanimous scoundrel! What! an honest servant of the law could find himself caught between two crimes, the crime of letting a man escape and the crime of arresting him! all was not certain, then, in the orders given by the State to the official! there could be blind alleys in duty! What then! all this was real! was it true that an ex-bandit, bowed under condemnation, could draw himself up and end by being in the right? was this credible? were there, then, cases in which the law must retire before transfigured crime and stammer its apologies! Yes, it was so! and Javert saw it! and Javert touched it! and not only could he not deny it but he had a share in it. These were realities, and it was abominable that real facts could attain such a deformity. If facts did their duty they would restrict themselves to bring proofs of the law; for facts are sent by God. Was, then, anarchy about to descend from on high? Thus, both in the exaggeration of agony and the optical illusion of consternation, everything which might have restricted and corrected his impression faded away, and society, the human race, and the universe henceforth were contained for his eyes in a simple and hideous outline—punishment, the thing tried, the strength due to the legislature, the decrees of sovereign courts, the magistracy, the government, prevention, and repression, official wisdom, legal infallibility,

the principle of authority, all the dogmas on which political and civil security, the sovereignty, justice, logic flowing from the code and public truth, were a heap of ruins, chaos; he himself, Javert, the watcher of order, incorruptibly in the service of the police, the Providence-dog of society, conquered and hurled to the ground, and on the summit of all this ruin stood a man in a green cap, and with a glory round his brow; such was the state of overthrow he had reached, such the frightful vision which he had in his mind. Was this endurable? no, it was a violent state, were there ever one, and there were only two ways of escaping from it; one was to go resolutely to Jean Valjean and restore to the dungeon the man of the galleys; the other—

Javert left the parapet, and with head erect this time walked firmly toward the guard-room indicated by a lantern at one of the corners of the Chatelet Square. On reaching it he saw through the window a policeman, and went in. The police recognize each other merely by the way in which they push open the door of a guard-room. Javert mentioned his name, showed his card to the sergeant, and sat down at the table on which a candle was burning. There were also on the table a pen, a leaden inkstand, and paper for drawing up verbal processes, and the reports of the night patrols. This table, always completed by a straw chair, is an institution; it exists in all police offices, it is always adorned with a boxwood saucer full of sawdust, and a box of red wafers, and it is the lower stage of the official style. It is here that the state literature commences. Javert took the pen and a sheet of paper and began writing. This is what he wrote:—

“A FEW REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE SERVICE.

“1. I beg M. le Prefet to cast his eyes on this.

“2. Prisoners when they return from examination at the magistrate's office take off their shoes and remain barefoot on the slab while they are being searched. This entails infirmary expenses.

“3. Tracking is good, with relays of agents at regular distances; but on important occasions two agents at the least should not let each other out of sight, because, if for any reason one agent were to fail in his duty,

the other would watch him and take his place.

“4. There is no explanation why the special rules of the prison of the Madelonnettes prohibit a prisoner from having a chair, even if he pay for it.

“5. At the Madelonnettes there are only two gratings to the canteen, which allows the canteen woman to let the prisoners touch her hand.

“6. The prisoners called barkers, who called the other prisoners to the visitor's room, demand two sous from each prisoner for crying his name distinctly. This is a robbery.

“7. Ten sous are stopped a prisoner working in the weaving room for a running thread; this is an abuse on the part of the manager, as the cloth is not the less good.

“8. It is annoying that visitors to la Force are obliged to pass through the boys' court in proceeding to the speaking room of St. Marie l'Egyptienne.

“9. It is certain that gendarmes are daily heard repeating the examination of prisoners by the magistrates, in the court-yard of the prefecture. For a gendarme, who ought to sacred, to repeat what he has heard in the office is a serious breach of duty.

“10. Madame Henry is an honest woman, her canteen is very clean, but it is wrong for a woman to hold the key of the secret cells. This is not worthy of the Conciergerie of a great civilization.”

Javert wrote these lines in his calmest and most correct handwriting, not omitting to cross a *t*, and making the paper cry firmly beneath his pen. Under the last line he signed.

JAVERT.

“Inspector of the 1st class,

“At the post of the Chatelet Square,  
June 7, 1832, about one in the morning.”

Javert dried the ink on the paper, folded it like a letter, sealed it, wrote on the back, *Note for the Administration*, left it on the table, and quitted the guard-room. The glass door fell back after him. He again diagonally crossed the Chatelet Square, reached the quay again, and went back with automatic precision to the same spot which he had left a quarter of an hour previously; he bent down and found himself again in the same attitude on the same parapet slab, it seemed as if he had not stirred. The darkness was complete, for it was the sepulchral

moment which follows midnight, a ceiling of clouds hid the stars: the houses in the Cité did not display a single light, no one passed, all the streets and quays that could be seen were deserted, and Notre Dame and the towers of the palace of justice appeared lineaments of the night. A lamp reddened the edge of the quay, and the shadows of the bridges looked ghostly one behind the other. Rains had swelled the river. The spot where Javert was leaning was, it will be remembered, precisely above the rapids of the Seine and that formidable whirlpool which unrolls itself and rolls itself up again like an endless screw. Javert stooped down and looked; all was dark and nothing could be distinguished. A sound of spray was audible, but the river was invisible. At moments in this dizzy depth a flash appeared and undulated, for water has the power, even on the darkest night, of obtaining light, no one knows whence, and changing itself into a lizard. The light faded away, and all became indistinct again. Immensity seemed open there, and what was beneath was not water, but the gulf. The quay-wall, abrupt, confused, mingled with the vapor, produced the effect of a precipice of infinitude.

Nothing could be seen but the hostile coldness of the water, and the sickly smell of the damp stones could be felt. A ferocious breath rose from this abyss, and the swelling of the river, divined rather than perceived, the tragic muttering of the water, the mournful enormity of the bridge arches, a possible fall into this gloomy vacuum—all this shadow was full of horror. Javert remained for some moments motionless, gazing at this opening of the darkness, and considered the invisible with an intentness which resembled attention. All at once he took off his hat and placed it on the brink of the quay. A moment after a tall black figure, which any belated passer-by might have taken at a distance for a ghost, appeared standing on the parapet, stooped toward the Seine, then drew itself up, and fell straight into the darkness. There was a splash, and the shadows alone were in the secret of this obscure form which had disappeared beneath the waters.

## CHAPTER CCLXI.

### IN THE WOOD AGAIN.

SOME time after the events which we have just recorded the *Sieur Boulatruelle* had a

lively emotion. The *Sieur Boulatruelle* is the road-mender of Montfermeil of whom we have already caught a glimpse in the dark portions of this book. Boulatruelle, it will be possibly remembered, was a man occupied with troubled and various things. He broke stones and plundered travellers on the highway. Road-mender and robber, he had a dream: he believed in the treasures buried in the forest of Montfermeil. He hoped some day to find money in the ground at the foot of a tree, and in the meanwhile readily sought in the pockets of passers-by. Still, for the present, he was prudent, for he had just had a narrow escape. He was, as we know, picked up with the other ruffians in Jondrette's garret. There is some usefulness in a vice, for his drunkenness saved him and it never could be cleared up whether he were there as a robber or as a robbed man. He was set at liberty an account of his proved intoxication on the night of the attack, and returned to the woods. He went back to his road from Gagny to Lagny, to break stones for the State, under surveillance, with hanging head and very thoughtful, slightly chilled by the robbery, which had almost ruined him, but turning with all the more tenderness to the wine which had saved him.

As for the lively emotion which he had a short time after his return beneath the turf-roof of his road-mender's cabin, it was this,—One morning Boulatruelle, while going as usual to work and to his lurking-place, possibly a little before daybreak, perceived among the branches a man whose back he could alone see, but whose shape, so he fancied, through the mist and darkness, was not entirely unknown to him. Boulatruelle, though a drunkard, had a correct and lucid memory, an indispensable defensive weapon for any man who is at all on bad terms with legal order.

"Where the deuce have I seen some one like that man?" he asked.

But he could give himself no reply, save that he resembled somebody of whom he had a confused recollection. Boulatruelle, however, made his calculations, though he was unable to settle the identity. This man did not belong to those parts, and had come there evidently a-foot, as no public vehicle passed through the Montfermeil at that hour. He must have been walking all night

Where did he come from? no great distance, for he had neither haversack nor bundle. Doubtless from Paris. Why was he in this wood? why was he there at such an hour? What did he want here? Boulatruelle thought of the treasure, by dint of racking his memory he vaguely remembered having had, several years previously, a similiar alarm on the subject of a man, who might very well be this man. While meditating he had, under the very weight of his meditation, hung his head, a natural but not clever thing. When he raised it again the man had disappeared in the forest and the mist.

"By the deuce," said Boulatruelle, "I will find him again, and discover to what parish that parishioner belongs. This walker of Patron-Minette has a motive, and I will know it. No one must have a secret in my forest without my being mixed up in it."

He took up his pick, which was very sharp. "Here's something," he growled, "to search the ground and a man."

And as one thread is attached to another thread, hobbling as fast as he could in the direction which the man must have followed, he began marching through the coppice. When he had gone about a hundred yards, day, which was beginning to break, aided him. Footsteps on the sand here and there, trampled grass, broken heather, young branches bent into the shrubs and rising with a graceful slowness, like the arms of a pretty woman who stretches herself on waking, gave him a species of trail. He followed it and then lost it, and time slipped away; he got deeper into the wood and reached a species of eminence. A matutinal sportsman passing at a distance along a path, and whistling the air of Guillery, gave him the idea of climbing up a tree, and though old, he was active. There was on the mound a very large beech, worthy of Tityrus and Boulatruelle, and he climbed up the tree as high as he could. The idea was a good one, for while exploring the solitude on the side where the wood is most entangled, Boulatruelle suddenly perceived the man, but had no sooner seen him than he lost him out of sight again. The man entered, or rather glided, into a rather distant clearing, masked by large trees, but which Boulatruelle knew very well, because he had noticed near a large heap of stones, a sick chestnut-tree, bandaged with a zinc belt nailed upon it. This clearing is what was

formerly called the Blaru-bottom, and the pile of stones, intended no one knows for what purpose, which could be seen there thirty years ago, is doubtless there still. Nothing equals the longevity of a heap of stones, except that of a plank hoarding. It is there temporarily, what a reason for lasting!

Boulatruelle, with the rapidity of joy, tumbled off the tree, rather than came down it. The lair was found, and now he had only to seize the animal. The famous treasure he had dreamed of was probably there. It was no small undertaking to reach the clearing by beaten paths which made a thousand annoying windings, it would take a good quarter of an hour; in a straight line through the wood, which is at that spot singularly dense, very thorny and most aggressive, it would take half an hour at least. This was what Boulatruelle was wrong in not understanding; he believed in the straight line, a respectable optical illusion, which has ruined many men. The wood, bristling though it was, appeared to him the right road.

"Let us go by the Rue de Rivoli of the wolves," he said.

Boulatruelle, accustomed to crooked paths, this time committed the error of going straight, and resolutely cast himself among the shrubs. He had to contend with holly, nettles, hawthorns, eglantines, thistles and most irascible roots, and was fearfully scratched. At the bottom of the ravine he came to a stream, which he was obliged to cross, and at last reached the Blaru clearing after forty minutes, perspiring, wet through, blowing, and ferocious. There was no one in the clearing. Boulatruelle hurried to the heap of stones; it was still in its place, and had not been carried off. As for the man, he had vanished in the forest. He had escaped; where? in which direction? into which clump of trees? it was impossible to guess. And, most crushing thing of all, there was behind the heap of stones and in front of the zinc-banded tree, a pick, forgotten or abandoned, and a hole; but the hole was empty.

"Robber!" Boulatruelle cried, shaking his fists at heaven.

## CHAPTER CCLXII.

MARIUS PREPARES FOR A DOMESTIC WAR.

MARIUS was for a long time neither dead nor alive. He had for several weeks a fever

accompanied by delirium, and very serious brain symptoms caused by the commotions of the wounds in the head rather than the wounds themselves. He repeated Cosette's name for whole nights with the lugubrious loquacity of fever and the gloomy obstinacy of agony. The width of certain wounds was a serious danger, for the suppurating of wide wounds may always be absorbed into the system, and consequently kills the patient, under certain atmospheric influences; and at each change in the weather, at the slightest storm, the physician became anxious. "Mind that the patient suffers from no emotion," he repeated. The dressings were complicated and difficult, for the fixing of the bandages and lint by the sparadrap had not been imagined at that period. Nicolette expended in a sheet "as large as a ceiling," she said; and it was not without difficulty that the chloruretted lotions and nitrate of silver reached the end of the gangrene. So long as there was danger, M. Gillenormand, broken-hearted by the bedside of his grandson, was like Marius, neither dead nor alive.

Every day, and sometimes twice a day, a white-haired and well-dressed gentleman, such was the description given by the porter came to inquire after the wounded man, and left a large parcel of lint for the dressings. At length, on September 7th, four months, day by day, from the painful night on which he had been brought home dying to his grandfather, the physician declared that he could answer for him, and that convalescence was setting in. Marius, however, would be obliged to lie for two months longer on a couch owing to the accidents produced by the fracture of the collar-bone. There is always a last wound like that which will not close, and eternizes the dressings, to the great annoyance of the patient. This long illness and lengthened convalescence, however, saved him from prosecution: in France there is no anger, even public, which six months do not extinguish. Riots, in the present state of society, are so much everybody's fault, that they are followed by a certain necessity of closing the eyes. Let us add that Gisquet's unjustifiable decree, which ordered physicians to denounce their patients having outraged opinion, and not merely opinion, but the king first of all, the wounded were covered and protected by this indignation, and, with the exception of those taken prisoners in the

act of fighting; the courts-martial did not dare to molest any one. Hence Marius was left tranquil.

M. Gillenormand first passed through every form of agony and then through every form of ecstasy. Equal difficulty was found in keeping him from passing the whole night by Marius' side, he had his large easy chair brought to the bed; and he insisted on his daughter taking the finest linen in the house to make compresses and bandages. Mademoiselle Gillenormand, as a sensible and elderly lady, managed to save the fine linen, while making her father believe that he was obeyed. M. Gillenormand would not listen to any explanation, that for the purpose of making lint fine linen is not so good as coarse, or new so good as worn. He was present at all the dressings, from which Mademoiselle Gillenormand modestly absented himself. When the dead flesh was cut away with scissors he said, *Aïe, aïe!* Nothing was so touching as to see him hand the wounded man a cup of broth with his gentle senile trembling. He overwhelmed the surgeon with questions, and did not perceive that he constantly repeated the same. On the day when the physician informed him that Marius was out of danger he was beside himself. He gave his porter three louis d'or, and at night, when he went to his bed-room, danced a gavotte, making castagnettes of his thumb and forefinger, and sang a song something like this,—

Jeanne est née a Fougère,  
Vrai nid d'une bergère;  
J'adore son jupon  
Fripou.

Amour, tu vis en elle;  
Car c'est dans sa prunelle  
Que tu mets ton carquois,  
Narquois!

Moi, je la chante, et j'aime,  
Plus que Diane même,  
Jeanne et ses durs tetons  
Bretons.

Then he knelt on a chair, and Basque, who was watching him through the crack of the door, felt certain that he was praying. Up to that day he had never believed in God. At each new phase in the improvement of the patient, which went on steadily, the grandfather was extravagant. He performed a multitude of mechanical actions full of de-

light: he went up and down stairs without knowing why. A neighbor's wife, who was very pretty, by the way, was stupefied at receiving one morning a large bouquet: it was M. Gillenormand who sent it to her, and her husband got up a jealous scene. M. Gillenormand tried to draw Nicolette on his knees: he called Marius Monsieur le Baron, and shouted, Long live the Republic! Every moment he asked the medical man, "There is no danger now, is there?" He looked at Marius with a grandmother's eyes, and gloated over him when he slept. He no longer knew himself, no longer took himself into account. Marius was the master of the house, there was abdication in his joy, and he was the grandson of his grandson. In his present state of merriment he was the most venerable of children: through fear of wearying or annoying the convalescent he would place himself behind him in order to smile upon him. He was satisfied, joyous, ravished, charming, and young, and his white hair added a gentle majesty to the gay light which he had on his face. When grace is mingled with wrinkles it is adorable; and there is a peculiar dawn in expansive old age.

As for Marius, while letting himself be nursed and petted, he had one fixed idea, Cosette. Since the fever and delirium had left him he no longer pronounced this name, and it might be supposed that he had forgotten it, but he was silent precisely because his soul was there. He knew not what had become of Cosette: the whole affair of the Rue de la Chanvrerie was like a cloud in his memory; almost indistinct shadows floated in his mind. Eponine, Gavroche, Mabeuf, the Thénardiens, and all his friends, mournfully mingled with the smoke of the barricade, the strange passage of M. Fauchelevent through that blood-stained adventure, produced upon him the effect of an enigma in a tempest: he understood nothing of his own life, he knew not how or by whom he had been saved, and no one about him knew it either: all they were able to tell him was that he had been brought there at night in a hackney-coach: past, present, future, all this was to him like the mist of a vague idea; but there was in this mist one immovable point, a clear and precise lineament, something made of granite, a resolution, a will—to find Cosette again. For him the idea of life was not distinct from the idea of Cosette: he had decreed in his

heart that he would not receive one without the other, and he unalterably determined to demand of his grandfather, of destiny, of fate, of Hades itself, the restitution of his lost Eden.

He did not conceal the obstacles from himself. Here let us underline one fact: he was not won or greatly affected by all the anxiety and all the tenderness of his grandfather. In the first place he was not in the secret of them all, and next, in his sick man's reveries, which were perhaps still feverish, he distrusted this gentleness as a strange and new thing intended to subdue him. He remained cold to it, and the poor grandfather lavished his smiles in pure loss. Marius said to himself that it was all very well so long as he did not speak and let matters rest, but when he came to Cosette, he should find another face, and his grandfather's real attitude would be unmasked. Then the affair would be rude; a warming up of family questions, a confrontation of position, every possible sarcasm and objection at once. Fauchelevent, Coupevent, fortune, poverty, wretchedness, the stone on the neck, and the future, a violent resistance, and the conclusion—a refusal. Marius stiffened himself against it beforehand. And then, in proportion as he regained life, his old wrongs reappeared, the old ulcers of his memory reopened; he thought again of the past. Colonel Pontmercy placed himself once more between M. Gillenormand and him, Marius, and he said to himself that he had no real kindness to hope for from a man who had been so unjust and harsh to his father. And with health came back a sort of bitterness against his grandfather, from which the old man gently suffered. M. Gillenormand, without letting it be seen, noticed that Marius, since he had been brought home and regained consciousness, had never once called him father. He did not say sir, it is true, but he managed to say neither the one nor the other, by a certain way of turning his sentences.

A crisis was evidently approaching, and as nearly always happens in such cases, Marius, in order to try himself, skirmished before offering battle; this is called feeling the ground. One morning it happened that M. Gillenormand, alluding to a newspaper which he had run across, spoke lightly of the Convention, and darted a royalist epigram at Danton, St. Just and Robespierre. "The

men of '93 were giants," Marius said sternly; the old man was silent and did not utter another syllable all the day. Marius, who had the inflexible grandfather of his early years ever present to his mind, saw in this silence a profound concentration of anger, augured from it an obstinate struggle, and augmented his preparations for the contest in the back nooks of his mind. He determined that in case of refusal he would tear off his bandages, dislocate his collar-bone, expose all the wounds still unhealed, and refuse all food. His wounds were his ammunition; he must have Cosette or die. He awaited the favorable moment with the crafty patience of sick persons, and the moment arrived.

## CHAPTER CCLXIII.

### MARIUS ATTACKS.

ONE day M. Gillenormand, while his daughter was arranging the phials and cups on the marble slab of the sideboard, leant over Marius, and said in his most tender accent,—

"Look you, my little Marius, in your place I would rather eat meat than fish; a fried sole is excellent at the beginning of a convalescence, but a good cutlet is necessary to put the patient on his legs."

Marius, whose strength had nearly quite returned, sat up, rested his two clenched fists on his sheet, looked his grandfather in the face, assumed a terrible air, and said,—

"That induces me to say one thing to you."

"What is it?"

"That I wish to marry."

"Foreseen," said the grandfather, burst into a laugh.

"How, foreseen?"

"Yes, foreseen. You shall have your little maid."

Marius, stupefied and dazzled, trembled in all his limbs, and M. Gillenormand continued,—

"Yes, you shall have the pretty little dear. She comes every day in the form of an old gentleman to ask after you. Ever since you have been wounded she has spent her time in crying and making lint. I made inquiries; she lives at No. 7 Rue de l'Homme Armé. Ah! there we are! Ah, you want her, do

you? Well, you shall have her. There's a take-in for you; you had made your little plot, and had said to yourself, 'I will tell it point-blank to that grandfather, that mummy of the Regency and the Directory, that old beau, that Dorante who has become G ronte; he has had his frolics, too, and his amourettes, and his grisettes, and his Cosettes; he has had his fling, he has had his wings, and he has eaten the bread of spring; he must surely remember it, we shall see. Battle!' Ah, you take the cockchafer by the horns, very good. I offer you a cutlet and you answer me, 'by the bye, I wish to marry.' By Jupiter Ammon, that is a transition! Ah, you made up your mind for a quarrel, but you did not know that I was an old coward. What do you say to that? You are done, you did not expect to find your grandfather more stupid than yourself. You have lost the speech you intended to make me, master lawyer, and that is annoying. Well, all the worse, rage away; I do what you want, and that cuts the speech short, ass. Listen! I have made my inquiries, for I too am cunning; she is charming, she is virtuous, the Lancer does not speak the truth; she made heaps of lint. She is a jewel; she adores you; if you had died there would have been three of us, and her coffin would have accompanied mine. I had the idea so soon as you were better of planting her there by your bedside, but it is only in romances that girls are introduced to the beds of handsome young wounded men in whom they take an interest. That would not do, for what would your aunt say? You were quite naked three parts of the time, sir; ask Nicolette, who never left you for a moment, whether it were possible for a female to be here? And, then, what would the doctor have said? for a pretty girl does not cure a fever. Well, say no more about it, it is settled and done, take her, such is my ferocity. Look you. I saw that you did not love me, and I said, 'What can I do to make that animal love me?' I said, 'Stay, I have my little Cosette ready to hand. I will give her to him, and then he must love me a little, or tell me the reason why.' Ah, you believed that the old man would storm, talk big, cry no, and lift his cane against all this dawn. Not at all. Cosette, very good; love, very good; I ask for nothing better, take the trouble, sir, to marry, be happy, my beloved child."

After saying this, the old man burst into sobs; he took Marius' head and pressed it to his old bosom, and both began weeping. That is one of the forms of supreme happiness.

"My father!" Marius exclaimed.

"Ah, you love me then!" the old man said.

There was an ineffable moment; they were choking and could not speak; at length the old man stammered,—

"Come! the stopper is taken out of him; he called me father."

Marius disengaged his head from his grandfather's arms, and said, gently,—

"Now that I am better, father, I fancy I could see her."

"Foreseen, too, you will see her to-morrow."

"Father?"

"Well, what?"

"Why not to-day?"

"Well to-day, done for to-day. You have called me father thrice and its worth that. I will see about it, and she shall be brought here. Foreseen, I tell you. That has already been put in verse, and it is the denouement of André Chenier's elegy, the '*Jenu malade*,' André Chenier who was butchered by the vill—by the giants of '93,"

M. Gillenormand fancied he could see a slight frown on Marius' face, though, truth to tell, he was not listening, as he had flown away into ecstasy, and was thinking much more of Cosette than of 1793. The grandfather, trembling at having introduced André Chénier so inopportunistly, hurriedly continued,—

"Butchered is not the word. The fact is that the great revolutionary geniuses who were not wicked, that is incontestable, who were heroes, Pardi, found that André Chénier was slightly in their way, and they had him guillo—that is to say, these great men on the 7th Thermidor, in the interest of the public safety, begged André Chénier to be kind enough to go—"

M. Gillenormand, garotted by his own sentence, could not continue; unable to terminate it or retract it, the old man rushed, with all the speed which his age allowed, out of the bed-room, shut the door after him, and purple, choking, and foaming, with his eyes out of his head, found himself nose to nose with honest Basque, who was cleaning

boots in the ante-room. He seized Basque by the collar, and furiously shouted into his face, "By the hundred thousand Javottes of the devil, those brigands assassinated him!"

"Whom, sir?"

"André Chénier."

"Yes, sir," said the horrified Basque.

## CHAPTER CCLXIV.

M. GILLENORMAND HAS NO OBJECTIONS TO THE MATCH.

Cosette and Marius saw each other again. We will not attempt to describe the interview; for there are things which we must not attempt to paint; the sun is of the number. The whole family, Basque and Nicolette included, were assembled in Marius' chamber at the moment when Cosette entered. She appeared in the doorway, and seemed to be surrounded by a halo; precisely at the moment this grandfather was going to blow his nose but he stopped short, holding his nose in his handkerchief and looking over it.

"Adorable!" he cried.

And then he blew a sonorous blast. Cosette was intoxicated, ravished, startled, in heaven. She was as timid as a person can be through happiness; she stammered, turned pale, and then pink, and wished to throw herself into Marius' arms, but dared not. She was ashamed of loving before so many people; for the world is merciless to happy lovers, and always remains at the very moment when they most long to be alone. And yet they do not want these people at all. With Cosette, and behind her, had entered a white-haired man, serious, but still smiling, though the smile was wandering and poignant. It was "*Monsieur Fauchelevent*,"—it was Jean Valjean. He was *well dressed*, as the porter had said, in a new black suit and a white cravat. The porter was a thousand leagues from recognizing in this correct citizen, this probable notary, the frightful corpse-bearer who had risen at the gate on the night of June 7th, ragged, filthy, hideous, and baggard, with a mask of blood and mud on his face, supporting in his arms the unconscious Marius; still his porter's instincts were aroused. When M. Fauchelevent arrived with Cosette the porter could not refrain from confiding this aside to his wife, "I



don't know why, but I fancy that I have seen that face before." M. Fauchelevant remained standing by the door of Marius' room, as if afraid; he held under his arm a packet rather like an octavo volume wrapped in paper. The paper was green, apparently from mildew.

"Has this gentleman always got books under his arm like that?" Mademoiselle Gillenormand, who was not fond of books, asked Nicolette in a whisper.

"Well," M. Gillenormand, who had heard her, answered in the same key, "he is a savant, is that his fault? Monsieur Boulard, whom I knew, never went out without a book either, and had always got one close to his heart."

Then bowing, he said, in a loud voice,—

"M. Tranchelevant."

Father Gillenormand did not do it purposely, but an inattention to proper names was an aristocratic way of his.

"Monsieur Tranchelevant, I have the honor of requesting this lady's hand for my grandson, M. le Baron Marius Pontmercy?"

Monsieur "Tranchelevant" bowed.

"All right," the grandfather said.

And turning to Marius and Cosette, with both arms extended in benediction, he cried,—

"You have leave to adore each other."

They did not let it be said twice, and the prattling began. They talked in a whisper, Marius reclining on his couch and Cosette standing by his side. "Oh, Heaven!" Cosette murmured, "I see you again: it is you. To go and fight like that! But why? it is horrible. For four months I have been dead. Oh how wicked it was of you to have been at that battle! what had I done to you? I forgive you, but you will not do it again. Just now, when they came to tell me to come to you, I thought again that I was going to die, but it was of joy. I was so sad! I did not take the time to dress myself, and I must look frightful; what will your relations say at seeing me in a tumbled collar? But speak! you let me speak all alone. We are still in the Rue de l'Homme Armé. It seems that your shoulder was terrible, and I was told that I could put my hand in it, and then it seems that your flesh was cut with scissors. How frightful that is! I wept so that I have no eyes left. It is strange that a person can suffer like that. Your grand-

father has a very kind look. Do not disturb yourself, do not get on your elbow like that, or you will do yourself an injury. Oh! how happy I am! So our misfortunes are all ended! I am quite foolish, There were things I wanted to say to you which I have quite forgotten. Do you love me still? We live in the Rue de l'Homme Armé. There is no garden there. I made lint the whole time; look here, sir, it is your fault, my fingers are quite rough."

"Angel!" said Marius.

*Angel* is the only word in the language which cannot be worn out; no other word would resist the pitiless use which lovers make of it. Then, as there was company present, they broke off, and did not say a word more, contenting themselves with softly clasping hands. M. Gillenormand turned to all the rest in the room, and cried,—

"Speak loudly, good people; make a noise, will you. Come, a little row, hang it all, so that these children may prattle at their ease."

And going up to Marius and Cosette, he whispered to them,—

"Go on; don't put yourselves out of the way."

Aunt Gillenormand witnessed with stupor this irruption of light into her antiquated house. This stupor had nothing aggressive about it; it was not at all the scandalized and envious glance cast by an owl at two ring-doves: it was the stupid eye of a poor innocent of the age of fifty-seven; it was a spoiled life looking at that triumph, love.

"Mademoiselle Gillenormand the elder," her father said to her, "I told you that this would happen."

He remained silent for a moment, and added,—

"Look at the happiness of others."

Then he turned to Cosette.

"How pretty she is! how pretty she is! she is a Greuze! So you are going to have all that for yourself, scamp? Ah, my boy, you have had a lucky escape from me; for if I were not fifteen years too old we would fight with swords and see who should have her. There, I am in love with you, mademoiselle; but it is very simple; it is your right. What a famous, charming little wedding we will have! Saint Denis du Saint-Sacrament is our parish; but I will procure a dispensation, so that you may be married at St. Paul, for the church is better. It was built for the Jesuits,

and more coquettish. It is opposite Cardinal Birague's fountain. The masterpiece of Jesuit architecture is at Namur, and is called St. Loup; you should go and see that when you are married, for it is worth the journey. Mademoiselle, I am entirely of your opinion; I wish girls to marry, for they are made for it. There is a certain Sainte Catherine whom I would always like to see uncovered. To remain a maid is fine, but it is cold. Multiply, says the Bible. To save the people a Joan of Arc is wanted; but to make a people we want Mother Gigogne. So marry, my darlings; I really do not see the use of remaining a maid. I know very well that they have a separate chapel in church, and join the confraternity of the virgin; but, sapristi, a good-looking young husband, and at the end of a year a plump banting, who sucks at you bravely, and who has rolls of fat on his thighs, and who clutches your bosom with his pink little paws, are a good deal better than holding a candle at vespers and singing *Turris Eburnea*."

The grandfather pirouetted on his monagenarian heels, and begun speaking again, like a spring which has been wound up.

Ainsi, bornant le cours de tes rêvasseries,  
Alcippe, il est donc vrai, dans peu tu te maries.

"By the bye?"

"What, father?"

"Had you not an intimate friend?"

"Yes, Courfeyrac."

"What has become of him?"

"He is dead?"

"That is well."

He sat down by their side, made Cosette take a chair, and took their four hands in his old wrinkled hands.

"This darling is exquisite. This Cosette is a masterpiece! She is a very little girl and a very great lady. She will be only a baroness, and that is a derogation, for she is born to be a marchioness. What eyelashes she has! My children drive it into your noddles that you are on the right road. Love one another; be foolish over it, for love is the stupidity of men and the cleverness of God. So adore one another. Still," he added, suddenly growing sad, "what a misfortune! more than half I possess is sunk in annuities; so long as I live it will be all right, but when I am dead, twenty years hence, ah! my poor children, you will not have a farthing. Your pretty white hands, Madame la Baronne, will be wrinkled by work."

Here a serious and calm voice was heard saying,—

"Mademoiselle Euphrasie Fauchelevent has six hundred thousand francs."

It was Jean Valjean's voice. He had not yet uttered a syllable; no one seemed to remember that he was present, and he stood motionless behind all these happy people.

"Who is the Mademoiselle Euphrasie in question?" the startled grandfather asked.

"Myself," said Cosette.

"Six hundred thousand francs!" M. Gillenormand repeated.

"Less fourteen or fifteen thousand, perhaps," Jean Valjean said.

And he laid on the table the parcel which Aunt Gillenormand had taken for a book. Jean Valjean himself opened the packet; it was a bundle of bank-notes. They were turned over and counted; there were six hundred bank-notes for a thousand francs, and one hundred and sixty-eight for five hundred, forming a total of five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs.

"That's a famous book," said M. Gillenormand.

"Five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs!" the aunt murmured.

"That arranges a good many things, does it not, Mademoiselle Gillenormand the elder?" the grandfather continued. "That devil of a Marius has found a millionaire grisette upon the tree of dreams! Now trust to the amorette of young people! Students find studentesses with six hundred thousand francs. Cherubin works better than Rothschild."

"Five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs!" Mademoiselle Gillenormand repeated; "five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs! we may as well say six hundred thousand."

As for Marius and Cosette, they were looking at each other during this period, and hardly paid any attention to the circumstances.

Of course our readers have understood, and no lengthened explanation will be required, that Jean Valjean after the Champmathieu affair was enabled by his escape for a few days to come to Paris, and withdraw in time from Laffitte's the sum he had gained under the name of M. Madeline at M.-sur-M.; and that, afraid of being recaptured, which in fact happened to him shortly after, he buried

this sum in the forest of Montfermeil, at the spot called the Blaru bottom. The sum, six hundred and thirty thousand francs, all in bank-notes, occupied but little space, and was contained in a box; but in order to protect the box from damp he placed it in an oak coffer filled with chips of chestnut-wood. In the same coffer he placed his other treasure, the bishop's candlesticks. It will be remembered that he carried off these candlesticks in his escape from M.-sur-M—. The man seen on one previous evening by Boulatrielle was Jean Valjean, and afterwards, whenever Jean Valjean required money, he fetched it from the Blaru clearing, and hence his absences to which we have referred. He had a pick concealed somewhere in the shrubs, in a hiding-place known to himself alone. When he found Marius to be convalescent, feeling that the hour was at hand when his money might be useful, he went to fetch it; and it was also he whom Boulatrielle saw in the wood, but this time in the morning, and not at night. Boulatrielle inherited the pick.

The real sum was five hundred and eighty-four thousand five hundred francs, but Jean Valjean kept back the five hundred francs for himself. "We will see afterwards," he thought. The difference between this sum and the six hundred and thirty thousand francs withdrawn from Laffitte's represented the expenditure of ten years from 1823 to 1833. The five years' residence in the convent had only cost five thousand francs. Jean Valjean placed the two silver candlesticks on the mantelpiece, where they glistened, to the great admiration of Toussaint. Moreover, Jean Valjean knew himself freed from Javert; it had been stated in his presence, and he verified the fact in the *Moniteur* which had published it, that an inspector of police of the name of Javert had been found drowned under a washerwoman's boat between the Pont-au-change and the Pont-Neuf, and that a letter left by this man, hitherto irreproachable and highly esteemed by his chiefs, led to the belief in an attack of dementia and suicide. "In truth, thought Jean Valjean, "since he let me go when he had hold of me he must have been mad at that time."

## CHAPTER CCLXV.

## THE OLD MEN RENDER COSETTE HAPPY.

ALL preparations were made for the marriage, and the physician, on being consulted, declared that it might take place in February. It was now December, and a few ravishing weeks of perfect happiness slipped away. The least happy man was not the grandfather, he sat for a whole quarter of an hour contemplating Cosette.

"The admirably pretty girl!" he would exclaim, "and she has so soft and kind an air! She is the most charming creature I have ever seen in my life. Presently she will have virtues with a violet scent. She is one of the Graces, on my faith! A man can only live nobly with such a creature. Marius, my lad, you are a baron, you are rich, so do not be a pettifogger, I implore you."

Cosette and Marius had suddenly passed from the sepulchre into paradise: the transition had not been prepared, and they would have been stunned if they had not been dazzled.

"Do you understand any thing of all this?" Marius would say to Cosette.

"No," Cosette answered, "but it seems to me as if le bon Dieu were looking at us."

Jean Valjean did everything, smoothed everything, conciliated everything, and rendered everything easy. He hurried toward Cosette's happiness with as much eagerness and apparently with as much joy as Cosette herself. As he had been mayor, he was called to solve a delicate problem, the secret of which he alone possessed,—the civil status of Cosette. To tell her origin openly might have prevented the marriage, but he got Cosette out of all the difficulties. He arranged for her a family of dead people, a sure method of not incurring any inquiry. Cosette was the only one left of an extinct family. Cosette was not his daughter, but the daughter of another Fauchelevent. Two brothers Fauchelevent had been gardeners at the convent of the Little Picpus; they went to his convent; the best testimonials and most satisfactory character were given; for the good nuns, little suited, and but little inclined to solve questions of paternity, had never known exactly of which of the two Fauchelevents Cosette was the daughter. They said what was wanted and said it zeal-

ously. An act of notoriety was drawn up, and Cosette became by law Mademoiselle Euphrasie Fauchelevent, and was declared an orphan both on the father's and mother's side. Jean Valjean managed so as to be designated under the name of Fauchelevent, as guardian of Cosette, with M. Gillenormand as supervising guardian. As for the five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs, they were a legacy left to Cosette by a dead person who wished to remain unknown: the original legacy had been five hundred and ninety-four thousand francs, but ten thousand had been spent in the education of Mademoiselle Euphrasie, five thousand of which had been paid to the convent. This legacy, deposited in the hands of a third party, was to be handed over to Cosette upon her majority, or at the period of her marriage. All this was highly acceptable, as we see, especially when backed up by more than half a million francs. There were certainly a few singular points here and there, but they were not seen, for one of the persons interested had his eyes bandaged by love, and the others by the six hundred thousand francs.

Cosette learned that she was not the daughter of the old man whom she had so long called father; he was only a relation, and another Fauchelevent was her real father. At another moment this would have grieved her, but in the ineffable hour she had now reached it was only a slight shadow, a passing cloud; and she had so much joy that this cloud lasted but a short time. She had Marius: the young man came, the old man disappeared; life is so. And then, Cosette had been accustomed for many long years to see enigmas around her; every being who has had a mysterious childhood is ever ready for certain renunciations. Still she continued to call Jean Valjean "father." Cosette, who was among the angels, was enthusiastic about Father Gillenormand; it is true that he overwhelmed her with madrigals and presents. While Jean Valjean was constructing for Cosette an unassailable position in society, M. Gillenormand attended to the wedding trousseau. Nothing amused him so much as to be magnificent; and he had given Cosette a gown of Binch guipure, which he inherited from his own grandmother. "These fashions spring up again," he said, "antiquities are the great demand, and the young ladies of my old days dress themselves like the old

ladies of my youth." He plundered his respectable round-bellied commodes of Coromandel lacquer, which had not been opened for years. "Let us shrive these dowagers," he said, "and see what they have in their paunch." He noisily violated drawers full of dresses of all his wives, all his mistresses, and all his female ancestry. He lavished on Cosette, Chinese satins, damasks, lampas, painted moires, grôs de Naples dresses, Indian handkerchiefs embroidered with gold that can be washed, Genoa and Alençon point lace, sets of old jewelry, ivory bonbon boxes adorned with microscopic battles, laces, and ribbons. Cosette, astounded, wild with love for Marius and with gratitude to M. Gillenormand, dreamed of an unbounded happiness, dressed in satin and velvet. Her wedding-basket seemed to her supported by seraphim, and her soul floated in ether with wings of Mechlin lace. The intoxication of the lovers was only equalled, as we stated, by the ecstasy of the grandfather, and there was something like a flourish of trumpets in the Rue des Filles du Calvaire. Each morning there was a new offering of *bric-à-brac* from the grandfather to Cosette, and all sort of ornaments were spread out splendidly around her. One day Marius, who was fond of talking seriously through his happiness, said, with reference to some incident which I have forgotten,—

"The men of the revolution are so great that they already possess the prestige of centuries, like Cato and like Phocion, and each of them seems an ancient memory (*mémoire antique*).

"*'Moire antique*!" exclaimed the old gentleman, "thank you, Marius, that is the very idea which I was seeking for."

And on the morrow a splendid tea-colored *moire antique* dress was added to Cosette's outfit. The grandfather extracted a wisdom from this frippery:—

"Love is all very well, but this is required with it. Something useless is required in happiness; happiness is only what is absolutely necessary, but season it, say I, with an enormous amount of superfluity. A palace and her heart; her heart and the Louvre. Give me my shepherdess, and try that she be a duchess. Bring me Phillis crowned with corn-flowers, and add to her one thousand francs a year. Open for me an endless *Bucolic* under a marble colonnade. I consent

to the Bucolic and also to the fairy scene in marble and gold. Dry happiness resembles dry bread ; you eat it but you do not dine. I wish for superfluity, for the useless, for extravagance, for that which is of no use. I remember to have seen in Strasbourg Cathedral a clock as tall as a three-storied house, which marked the hour, which had the kindness to mark the hour, but did not look as if it was made for the purpose : and which, after striking midday or midnight, midday, —the hour of the sun, and midnight, the hour of love, or any other hour you please,—gave you the moon and the stars, earth and sea, birds and fishes, Phœbus and Phœbe, and a heap of things that came out of a corner, and the twelve apostles, and the Emperor Charles V., and Eponine, and Sabinus, and a number of little gilt men, who played the trumpet, into the bargain, without counting the ravishing chimes which it scattered in the air on every possible occasion, without your knowing why. Is a wretched naked clock, which only marks the hours, worth that? I am of the opinion of the great clock of Strasbourg, and prefer it to the Black Forest cuckoo clock."

M. Gillenormand talked all sorts of nonsense about the marriage, and all the ideas of the eighteenth century passed pell-mell into his dithyrambes.

"You are ignorant of the art of festivals, and do not know how to get up a day's pleasure in these times," he exclaimed. Your nineteenth century is soft, and is deficient in excess : it is ignorant of what is rich and noble. In every thing it is close-shorn. Your third estate is insipid and has no color, smell, or shape. The dream of your bourgeois who establish themselves, as they call it, is a pretty boudoir freshly decorated with mahogany and calico. Make way, there ! the Sieur Grigou marries the Demoiselle Grippesou. Sumptuousness and splendor. A louis d'or has been stuck to a wax candle. Such is the age. I insist on flying beyond the Sarmatians. Ah, so far back as 1787 I predicted that all was lost on the day when I saw the Duc de Rohan, Prince de Léon, Duc de Chabot, Duc de Montbazan, Marquis de Soubise, Vicomte de Thouars, and Peer of France, go to Longchamps in a *tapécul* : that bore its fruits. In this century men have a business, a gamble on the Stock Exchange, win money, and are mean. They

take care of and varnish their surface : they are carefully dressed, washed, soaped, shaved, combed, rubbed, brushed, and cleaned externally, irreproachable, as polished as a pebble, discreet, trim, and at the same time, virtue of my soul ! they have at the bottom of their conscience dunghoops and cesspools, at which a milkmaid who blows her nose with her fingers would recoil. I grant the present age this motto,—dirty cleanliness. Marius, do not be annoyed ; grant me the permission to speak, for I have been saying no harm of the people, you see. I have my mouth full of your people, but do let me give the bourgeoisie a pill. I tell you point blank that at the present day people marry, but no longer know how to marry. Ah, it is true, I regret the gentility of the old manners ; I regret every thing ; that elegance, that chivalry, that courteous and dainty manner, that rejoicing luxury which every one possessed, the music forming part of the wedding, symphony above and marrow-bones and cleavers below-stairs, the joyous faces seated at table, the spicy madrigals, the songs, the fireworks, the hearty laugh, the devil and his train, and the large ribbon bows. I regret the bride's garter, for it is first cousin of the girdle of Venus. On what does the siege of Troy turn? Parbleu, on Helen's garter. Why do men fight? Why does the divine Diomedes smash on the head of Merioneus that grand brass helmet, with the ten points? Why do Achilles and Hector tickle each other with lances? Because Helen let Paris take her garter. With Cosette's garter Homer would write the Iliad ; he would place in his poem an old chatterer like myself, and call him Nestor. My friends, in former times, in those amiable former times, people married learnedly : they made a good contract and then a good merrymaking. So soon as Cujas had gone out, Gamacho came in. Hang it all ! the stomach is an agreeable beast, that demands its due, and wishes to hold its wedding too. We supped well, and had at table a pretty neighbor without a neck-kerchief, who only concealed her throat moderately. Oh, the wide laughing mouths, and how gay people were in those days ! Youth was a bouquet, every young man terminated in a branch of lilac or a posy of roses ; if he were a warrior, he wore a shepherd, and if by chance he were a captain of dragoons, he managed to call himself Florian. All were

anxious to be pretty fellows, and they wore embroidery and rouge. A bourgeois looked like a flower, and a marquis like a precious stone. They did not wear straps, they did not wear boots; they were flashing, lustrous, gilt, light, dainty, and coquettish, but it did not prevent them wearing a sword by their side; they were humming birds with beak and nails. It was the time of the *Indes galantes*. One of the sides of that age was delicate, the other magnificent; and by the vertuchoux, people amused themselves. At the present day folk are serious; the bourgeois is miserly, the bourgeoisie prudish, and your age is out of shape. The grave would be expelled because their dresses were cut too low in the neck. Alas! beauty is concealed as an ugliness. Since the revolution all wear trousers, even the ballet girls; a ballet girl must be serious, and your rigadoons are doctrinaire. A man must be majestic, and would feel very much annoyed at not having his chin in his cravat. The idea of a scamp of twenty, who is about to marry, is to resemble Monsieur Royes-collard. And do you know what people reach by this majesty? they are little. Learn this fact: joy is not merely joyous, it is grand. Be amorous gayly, though, hang it all! marry, when you do marry, with fever and amazement and row and the tohu-bohu of happiness. Gravity at church, if you will; but so soon as the mass is ended, sarpejon, you ought to make a dream whirl round your wife. A marriage ought to be royal and chimerical, and promenade its ceremony from the Cathedral of Rheims to the Pagoda of Chanteloup. I have a horror of a scrubby marriage, Ventregoulette! be an Olympus at least upon that day. Be gods. Ah, people might be sylphs. Games and laughter, Argyraspides, but they are scrubs: my friends, every newly-married man ought to be Prince Aldobrandini. Take advantage of this unique moment of life to fly into the Empyrean with the swans and the eagles, even if you fall back to-morrow into the bourgeoisie of frogs. Do not save upon the hymeneal rites; do not nibble at this splendor, nor split farthings on the day when you are radiant. A wedding is not housekeeping. Oh, if I had my way it should be a gallant affair, and violins should be heard in the trees. Here is my programme: sky-blue and silver. I would mingle in the fête the rustic divinities, and convene the Dryads and the

Nereids. The wedding of Amphitrite, a pink cloud, nymphs with their hair carefully dressed and quite nude, an academician offering quatrains to the Deess, a car drawn by marine monsters.

Triton trottaît devant, et tiraît de sa conque,

Des sons si ravissants qu'il ravissait quiconque!

There is a programme for a fête, or I'm no judge, *sac à papier!*"

While the grandfather, in the heat of his lyric effusion, was listening to himself, Cosette and Marius were intoxicating themselves by looking freely at each other. Aunt Gillenormand regarded all this with her imperturbable placidity; she had, during the last five or six months, a certain amount of emotions; Marius returned, Marius brought back bleeding, Marius brought from a barricade, Marius dead, then living, Marius reconciled, Marius affianced, Marius marrying a poor girl, Marius marrying a millionaire. The six hundred thousand francs had been her last surprise, and then her indifference as first communicant returned to her. She went regularly to her mass, told her beads, read her enchology, whispered in one corner of the house her *Aves*, while "*I love you*," was being whispered in another, and saw Marius and Cosette vaguely like two shadows. The shadow was herself. There is a certain state of inert asceticism in which the mind, neutralized by torpor, and a stranger to what might be called the business of living, does not perceive, with the exception of earthquakes and catastrophes, any human impressions, either pleasant or painful. "This devotion," Father Gillenormand would say to his daughter, "resembles a cold in the head; you smell nothing of life, neither a good odor nor a bad one." However, the six hundred thousand francs had settled the old maid's indecision. Her father was accustomed to take her so little into account that he had not consulted her as to the consent to Marius' marriage. He had acted impetuously, according to his wont, having, as a despot who had become a slave, but one thought, that of satisfying Marius. As for the aunt, he had scarce remembered that the aunt existed, and that she might have an opinion of her own, and, sheep though she was, this had offended her. Somewhat roused internally, but externally impassive, she said to herself, "My father settles the marriage question without me, and I will settle the question of

the inheritance without him." She was rich, in fact, and her father was not so, and it is probable that if the marriage had been poor she would have left it poor. "All the worse for my nephew! if he choose to marry a beggar, he may be a beggar too." But Cosette's half-a-million of francs pleased the aunt and changed her feelings with respect to the loving couple; consideration is due to six hundred thousand francs, and it was evident that she could not do otherwise than leave her fortune to these young people, because they no longer required it.

It was arranged that the couple should reside at M. Gillenormand's, and the grandfather insisted on giving them his bed-room, the finest room in the house. "*It will make me younger,*" he declared. "*It is an old place. I always had the idea that the wedding should take place in my room.*" He furnished this room with a heap of old articles of gallantry; he had it hung with an extraordinary fabric which he had in the piece, and believed to be Utrecht, a gold satin ground with velvet auriculas. "It was with that stuff," he said, "that the bed of the Duchess d' Anville à la Rocheguyon was hung." He placed on the mantelpiece a figure in Saxon porcelain carrying a muff on its naked stomach. M. Gillenormand's library became the office, which Marius required, for an office, it will be borne in mind, is insisted upon by the council of the order.

## CHAPTER CCLXVI.

### TWO MEN IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND.

THE lovers saw each other daily; and Cosette came with M. Fauchelevant. "It is turning things topsy-turvy," said Mademoiselle Gillenormand, "that the lady should come to the gentleman's house to have court paid to her in that way." But Marius' convalescence had caused the adoption of the habit, and the easy chairs of the Rue des Filles due Calvaire, more convenient for a *tête-à-tête* than the straw-bottomed chairs of the Rue de l'Homme Armé, had decided it. Marius and Mr. Fauchelevant saw each other, but did not speak, and this seemed to be agreed on. Every girl needs a chaperon, and Cosette could not have come without Mr. Fauchelevant; and for Marius, M. Fauchelevant was the condition of Cosette, and he ac-

cepted him. In discussing vaguely, and without any precision, political matters as connected with the improvement of all, they managed to say a little more than Yes and No. Once, on the subject of instruction, which Marius wished to be gratuitous and obligatory, multiplied in every form, lavished upon all like light and air, and, in a word, respirable by the entire people, they were agreed, and almost talked. Marius remarked on this occasion that M. Fauchelevant spoke well, and even with a certain elevation of language, though something was wanting. M. Fauchelevant had something less than a man of the world, and something more. Marius, in his innermost thoughts, surrounded with all sorts of questions this M. Fauchelevant, who was to him simple, well-wishing and cold. At times doubts occurred to him as to his own recollections; he had a hole in his memory, a black spot, an abyss dug by four months of agony. Many things were lost in it, and he was beginning to ask himself whether it was in the fact that he had seen M. Fauchelevant, a man so serious and so calm, at the barricade.

This was, however, not the sole stupor, which the appearances and disappearances of the past had left in his mind. We must not believe that he was delivered from all those promptings of memory which compel us, even when happy and satisfied, to take a melancholy backward glance. The head which does not turn to effaced horizons contains neither thought nor love. At moments Marius buried his face in his hands, and the tumultuous and vague past traversed the fog which he had in his brain. He saw Maboëuf fall again, he heard Gavroche singing under the grape-shot, and he felt on his lips the coldness of Eponine's forehead; Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, Combeferre, Bossuet, Grantaire, all his friends rose before him, and then disappeared. Where all these dear, dolorous, valiant, charming and tragic beings, dreams? had they really existed? The riot had robbed every thing in its smoke, and these great fevers had great dreams. He questioned himself, he felt himself, and had a dizziness from all these vanished realities. Where were they all, then? was it really true that everything was dead? a fall into the darkness had carried away every thing, except himself; all this had disappeared as it were behind the curtain of a theatre. There are such curtains which

drop on life, and God passes on to the next act. In himself was he really the same man? He, poor, was rich; he, the abandoned man, had a family, he, the desperate man, was going to marry Cosette. He seemed to have passed through a tomb and that he had gone in black and come out white. And in this tomb the others had remained. At certain times all these beings of the past, returning and present formed a circle round him, and rendered him gloomy. Then he thought of Cosette, and became serene again, but it required no less than this felicity to efface this catastrophe. M. Fauchelevant had almost a place among these vanished beings. Marius hesitated to believe that the Fauchelevant of the barricade was the same as that Fauchelevant in flesh and bone, so gravely seated by the side of Cosette. The first was probable one of those nightmares brought to him and carried away by his hours of delirium. However, as their two natures were scarped, it was impossible for Marius to ask any question of M. Fauchelevant. The idea had not even occurred to him, we have already indicated this characteristic detail. Two men who have a common secret, and who by a sort of tacit agreement, do not exchange a syllable on the subject, are not so rare as may be supposed.

Once, however, Marius made an effort; he turned the conversation on the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and turning to M. Fauchelevant, he said to him,

"Do you know that street well?"

"What street?"

"The Rue de la Chanvrerie."

"I have never heard of the name of that street," Mr. Fauchelevant said, in the most natural tone in the world.

The answer, which related to the name of the street, and not to the street itself, seemed to Marius more conclusive than it really was.

"Decidedly," he thought, "I must have been dreaming. I had an hallucination. It was some one that resembled him, and M. Fauchelevant was not there."

The enchantment, great though it was, did not efface other thoughts from Marius' mind. While the marriage arrangements were being made, and the fixed period was waited for, he made some difficult and scrupulous retrospective researches. He owed gratitude in several quarters, he owed it for his father, and he owed it for himself. There was Thénardier, and there was the stranger who had

brought him back to M. Gillenormand's Marius was anxious to find these two men again, as he did not wish to marry, be happy, and forget them and feared lest these unpaid debts of honor might cast a shadow over his life, which would henceforth be so luminous. It was impossible for him to leave all these arrears suffering behind him, and he wished, ere he entered joyously into the future, to obtain a receipt from the past. That Thénardier was a villain took nothing from the fact that he had saved Colonel Pontmercy. Thénardier was a bandit for all the world excepting Marius. And Marius, ignorant of the real scene on the battlefield of Waterloo, did not know this peculiarity, that his father stood to Thénardier in the strange situation of owing him life without owing him gratitude. Not one of the agents whom Marius employed could find Thénardier's trail, and the disappearance seemed complete on that side. Mother Thénardier had died in prison before trial, and Thénardier and his daughter Azelma, the only two left of this lamentable group, had plunged again into the shadow. The gulf of the social unknown had silently closed again upon these beings. No longer could be seen on the surface that quivering, that tremor, and those obscure concentric circles which announce that something has fallen there, and that a grappling-iron may be thrown in.

Mother Thénardier being dead, Boulatruelle being out of the question, Claquesous having disappeared, and the principal accused having escaped from prison, the trial for the trap in the Gorbeau attic had pretty nearly failed. The affair had remained rather dark, and the assize court had been compelled to satisfy itself with two subalterns, Panchaud, *alias* Printanier, *alias* Bigrenaille, and Demi-Liard, *alias* Deux Millions, who had been condemned contradictorily to the galleys fourteen years. Penal servitude for life was passed against their accomplices who escaped; Thénardier as chief and promoter, was condemned to death, also in default. This condemnation was the only thing that remained of Thénardier, casting on this buried name its sinister gleam, like a candle by the side of a coffin. However, this condemnation, by thrusting Thénardier back into the lowest depths through the fear of being recaptured added to the dense gloom which covered this man.



As for the other, the unknown man who had saved Marius, the researches had at first some result, and then stopped short. They succeeded in finding again the hackney-coach which had brought Marius to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire on the night of June 6. The driver declared that on the sixth of June, by the order of a police agent, he had stopped from 3 p. m. till night-fall on the quay of the Champs Elysées, above the opening of the great sewer; that at about nine in the evening the gate of the sewer which looks upon the river-bank opened; that a man came out, bearing on his shoulders another man, who appeared to be dead; that the agent, who was watching at this point, had arrested the living man, and seized the dead man; that he, the coachman, had taken "all these people" into his hackney-coach; that they drove first to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, and deposited the dead man there; that the dead man was M. Marius, and that he, the coachman, recognized him thoroughly, though he was alive at this time; that afterwards they got into his coach again, and a few yards from the gate of the Archives he was ordered to stop; that he was paid in the street and discharged, and the agent took away the other man; that he knew nothing more, and that the night was very dark. Marius, as we said, remembered nothing. He merely remembered that he had been seized from behind by a powerful hand at the moment when he fell backwards from the barricade, and then all was effaced for him. He had only regained his senses when he was at M. Gillenormand's.

He lost himself in conjectures; he could not doubt as to his own identity, but how was it that he, who had fallen in the Rue la Chanvrerie, had been picked up by the police agent on the bank of the Seine, near the bridge of the Invalides? Some one had brought him from the quarter of the Halles to the Champs Elysées, and how? by the sewer? Extraordinary devotion! Some one? who? it was the man whom Marius was seeking. Of this man who was his savior, he could find nothing, not a trace, not the slightest sign. Marius, though compelled on his side to exercise a great reserve pushed on his inquiries as far as the prefecture of police, but there the information which he obtained led to no better result than elsewhere. The prefecture knew less about the matter than the driver of the hackney-coach; they had no knowledge

of any arrest having taken place at the outlet of the great drain on June 6; they had received no report from the agent about this fact which, at the prefecture, was regarded as a fable. The invention of this fable was attributed to the driver; for a driver anxious for drink-money is capable of anything, even imagination. The fact, however, was certain, and Marius could not doubt it, unless he doubted his own identity, as we have just said. Everything in this strange enigma was inexplicable; this man, this mysterious man, whom the driver had seen come out of the grating of the great drain, bearing the fainting Marius on his back, and whom the police agent caught in the act of saving an insurgent,—what had become of him? what had become of the agent himself? why had this agent kept silence? had the man succeeded in escaping! had he corrupted the agent? why did this man give no sign of life to Marius, who owed everything to him? the disinterestedness was no less prodigious than the devotion. Why did this man not reappear? perhaps he was above reward, but no man is above gratitude. Was he dead? who was the man? what face had he? No one was able to say; the driver replied,—“The night was very dark.” Basque and Nicolette in their start had only looked at their young master, who was all bloody. The porter, whose candle had lit up Marius’ tragic arrival, had alone remarked the man in question, and this was the description he gave of him, “The man was frightful.”

In the hope of deriving some advantage from them for his researches, Marius kept his blood-stained clothes, which he wore when he was brought to his grandfather's. On examining the coat it was noticed that the skirt was strangely torn, and a piece was necessary. One evening Marius was speaking in the presence of Cosette and Jean Valjean about all this singular adventure, the countless inquiries he had made, and the inutility of his efforts; Monsier Fauchelevent's cold face offended him, and he exclaimed with the vivacity which had already the vibration of anger,—

“Yes, that man, whoever he may be, was sublime! Do you know what he did, sir? He intervened like an archangel. He was obliged to throw himself into the midst of the contest, carry me away, open the sewer, drag me off, and carry me. He must have gone

more than a league and a half through frightful subterranean galleries, bent and bowed in the darkness, in the sewer, for more than half a league, sir, with a corpse on his back! And for what object? for the sole object of saving that corpse, and that corpse was myself. He said to himself,—‘There is, perhaps, a gleam of life left here, and I will risk my existence for this wretched spark!’ and he did not risk his existence once, but twenty times! and each step was a danger, and the proof is, that on leaving the sewer, he was arrested. Do you know, sir, that this man did all that? and he had no reward to expect. Who was I? An insurgent. Who was I? A conquered man. Oh! if Cosette’s six thousand francs were mine—”

“They are yours,” Jean Valjean interrupted.

“Well, then,” Marius continued, “I would give them to find that man again.”

Jean Valjean was silent.

## CHAPTER CCLXVII.

FEBRUARY 16, 1833.

THE night of February 16th was a blessed night, for it had above its shadow the open sky. It was the wedding-night of Marius and Cosette. The day had been adorable; it was not the adorable blue feast dreamed of by the grandfather, a fairy scene, with a confusion of cherubims and cupids above the head of the married couple, a marriage worthy of being represented over a door; but it had been sweet and smiling. The fashion of marrying in 1833 was not at all as it is now. France had not yet borrowed from England that supreme delicacy of carrying off the wife, flying on leaving the church, hiding one’s self as if ashamed of one’s happiness, and combining the manœuvres of a bankrupt with the ravishment of the Song of Songs. We had not yet understood how chaste, exquisite, and decent it is to jolt one’s paradise in a post-chaise, to vary the mystery with clic-clacs of the whip; to select an inn bed as the nuptial couch, and to leave behind one, at the conventional alcove at so much per night, the most sacred recollection of life, pell-mell with the *tête-à-têtes* of the guard of the diligence and the chamber-maid. In the second half of the nineteenth century, in which we now are, the mayor and his scarf, the priest

and his chasuble, the law and God, are no longer sufficient; they must be complimented by the postilion of Longjumeau; blue jacket with red facings and bell buttons, a leather-bound plate, green leather breeches, oaths to the Norman horses with their knotted tails, false aguillettes, oil skin hat, heavy, dusty horses, an enormous whip, and strong boots. France does not carry the elegance to such an extent as to shower on the postchaise, as the English nobility do, old shoes and battered slippers, in memory of Churchill, afterwards Marlborough or Malbrouck, who was assailed on his wedding-day by the anger of an aunt which brought him good luck. Shoes and slippers do not yet form part of our nuptial celebrations; but, patience, with the spread of good taste, we shall yet come to it.

In 1733, that is to say, one hundred years ago, marriage was not performed at a smart trot; people still supposed at that epoch, whimsically enough, that a marriage is a private and social festival, that a patriarchal banquet does not spoil a domestic solemnity; that gayety, even if it be excessive, so long as it is decent, does no harm to happiness; and, finally, that it is venerable and good for the fusion of these two destinies from which a family will issue, to begin in the house, and that the household may have in future the nuptial chamber as a witness. And people were so immodest as to marry at home. The wedding took place then, according to this fashion which is now antiquated, at M. Gillenormand’s; and though this affair of marrying is so simple and natural, the publication of the banns, drawing up the deeds, the mayoralty, and the church, always cause some complication, and they could not be ready before February 16th. Now—we note this detail for the pure satisfaction of being exact—it happened that the 16th was Shrove Tuesday. There were hesitations and scruples, especially on the part of Aunt Gillenormand.

“A Shrove Tuesday!” the grandfather exclaimed: “all the better. There is a proverb that

‘Mariage un Mardi gras  
N’aura point d’enfants ingrats.’

All right. Done for the 16th. Do you wish to put it off, Marius?”

“Certainly not,” said the amorous youth.

“We’ll marry then,” said the grandfather.

The marriage, therefore, took place on the 16th, in spite of the public gayety, It rained

on that day, but there is always in the sky a little blue patch at the service of happiness, which lovers see, even when the rest of creation are under their umbrellas. On the previous day, Jean Valjean had handed to Marius, in the presence of M. Gillenormand, the five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs. As the marriage took place in the ordinary way, the deeds were very simple. Toussaint was henceforth useless to Jean Valjean, so Cosette inherited her, and promoted her to the rank of lady's-maid. As for Jean Valjean, a nice room was furnished expressly for him at M. Gillenormand's, and Cosette had said to him so irresistibly,—“Father, I implore you,” that she had almost made him promise that he would come and occupy it. A few days before that fixed for the marriage, an accident happened to Jean Valjean; he slightly injured the thumb of his right hand. It was not serious, and he had not allowed any one to poultice it, or even see it, not even Cosette. Still, it compelled him to wrap up his hand in a bandage and wear his arm in a sling, and this, of course, prevented him from signing anything. M. Gillenormand, as supervising guardian to Cosette, took his place. We will not take the reader either to the mayoralty or to church. Two lovers are not usually followed so far, and we are wont to turn our back on the drama, so soon as it puts a bridegroom's bouquet in its button-hole. We will restrict ourselves to noting an incident which, though unnoticed by the bridal party, marked the drive from the Rue des Filles du Calvaire to St. Paul's church.

The Rue St. Louis was being repaired at the time, and it was blocked from the Rue du Parc Royal, hence it was impossible for the carriage to go direct to St. Paul's. As they were obliged to change their course, the most simple plan was to turn into the boulevard. One of the guests drew attention to the fact that, as it was Shrove Tuesday, there would be a block of vehicles. “Why so?” M. Gillenormand asked. “On account of the masks.” “Famous,” said the grandfather; “we will go that way. These young people are going to marry and see the serious side of life, and seeing the masquerade will be a slight preparation for it.” They turned into the boulevard: the first contained Cosette and Aunt Gillenormand, M. Gillenormand and Jean Valjean. Mari-

us, still separated from his bride, according to custom, was in the second. The nuptial procession, on turning out of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, joined the long file of vehicles making an endless chain from the Madeleine to the Bastille, and from the Bastille to the Madeleine. Masks were abundant on the boulevard, and though it rained every now and then, Paillasse, Pantalon, and Gille were obstinate. In the good humor of that winter of 1833 Paris had disguised itself as Venus. We do not see such Shrove Tuesdays nowadays, for as every thing existing is a wide-spread carnival, there is no carnival left. The sidewalks were thronged with pedestrians, and the windows with gazers; and the terraces crowning the peristyles of the theatres were covered with spectators. In addition to the masks they look at the file, peculiar to Shrove Tuesday as to Longchamp, of vehicles of every description, citadines, carts, curricles, and cabs, marching in order rigorously riveted to each other by police regulations, and, as it were, running on tramways. Any one who happens to be in one of these vehicles is at once spectator and spectacle. Policemen standing by the side of the boulevard kept in place these two interminable files moving in a contrary direction, and watched that nothing should impede the double current of these two streams, one running up, the other down, one towards the Chaussée d'Antin, the other towards the Faubourg St. Antoine. The escutcheoned carriages of the peers of France and ambassadors held the crown of the causeway, coming and going freely; and certain magnificent and gorgeous processions, notably the Bœuf gras, had the same privilege. In this Parisian gayety, England clacked his whip, for the post-chaise of Lord Seymour, at which a popular sobriquet was hurled, passed with a great rumor.

In the double file, along which Municipal Guards galloped like watch-dogs, honest family arks, crowded with great-aunts and grandmothers, displayed at windows healthy groups of disguised children, Pierrots of seven, and Pierrettes of six, ravishing little creatures, feeling that they officially formed part of the public merriment, penetrated with the dignity of their Harlequinade, and displaying the gravity of functionaries. From time to time a block occurred somewhere in the procession of vehicles; one or other of the two side files

stopped until the knot was untied, and one impeded vehicle stopped the entire line. Then they started again. The wedding carriages were in the file, going toward the Bastille on the right-hand side of the boulevard. Opposite the Rue du Pont-aux-Choux there was a stoppage, and almost at the same moment the file on the other side proceeding toward the Madeleine stooped too. At this point of the procession there was a carriage of masks. These carriages, or to speak more correctly, these cart-loads of masks, are well known to the Parisians; if they failed on a Shrove Tuesday or at mid-lent, people would say, "*There's something behind it. Probably we are going to have a change of ministry.*" A heap of Cassanders, Harlequins, and Columbines jolted above the heads of the passers-by—all possible grotesques, from the Turk to the savage. Hercules supporting Marquises, fish-fags who would make Rabelais stop his ears, as well as Mænads who would make Aristophanes look down, tow perukes, pink fleshings, three-cornered hats, pantaloons, spectacles, cries given to the pedestrians, fists stemmed on hips, bold postures, naked shoulders, masked faces, and unmuzzled immodesty; a chaos of effronteries driven by a coachman in a head-dress of flowers—such is this institution. Greece felt the want of Thespis' cart, and France needs Vadé's fiacre. All may be parodied, even parody; and the Saturnalia, that grimace of antique beauty, arrive by swelling and swelling at the Mardi gras: and the Bacchanal, formerly crowned with vine-leaves, inundated by sunshine, and displaying her marble breasts in a divine semi-nudity, which is now flabby under the drenched rage of the north, has ended by calling herself—

The tradition of the coaches of masks dates back to the oldest times of the monarchy: the accounts of Louis XI. allow the palace steward "twenty sous tournois for three coaches of masquerades." In our time, these noisy piles of creatures generally ride in some old coucou of which they encumber the roof, or cover with their tumultuous group a landau of which the hood is thrown back. You see them on the seat, on the front stool, on the springs of the hood and on the pole, and they even straddle across the lamps. They are standing, lying down, or seated, cross-legged, or with pendant legs.

The women occupy the knees of the men, and this wild pyramid is seen for a long distance over the heads of the crowd. These vehicles form mountains of merriment in the midst of the mob, and Collé, Panard, and Piron flow from them enriched with slang, and the fish-fag's catechism is expectorated from above upon the people. This fiacre, which has grown enormous through its burden, has an air of conquest: Brouhaha is in front and Tohu-bohu behind. People shout in it, sing in it, yell in it, and writhe with happiness in it; gayety roars there, sarcasm flashes, and joviality is displayed like a purple robe; two screws drag in it farce expanded into an apotheosis, and it is the triumphal car of laughter,—a laughter, though, too cynical to be frank, and in truth this laughter is suspicious. It has a mission, that of proving the carnival to the Parisians. These fish-fag vehicles, in which some strange darkness is perceptible, cause the philosopher to reflect; there is something of the government in them, and you lay your finger there on a curious affinity between public men and public women. It is certainly a sorry thought, that heaped up turpitudes give a sum-total of gayety, that a people can be amused by building up ignominy on opprobrium, that spying, acting as a caryatid to prostitution, amuses the mob while affronting it, that the crowd is pleased to see pass on four wheels this monstrous living pile of beings, spangled rags, one half ordure, one-half light, who bark and sing, that they should clap their hands at all this shame, and that no festival is possible for the multitude unless the police promenade in its midst these twenty-headed hydras of joy. Most sad this certainly is, but what is to be done? These tumbrels of beribboned and flowered filth are insulted and amnesticized by the public laughter, and the laughter of all is the accomplice of the universal degradation. Certain unhealthy festivals disintegrate the people and convert them into populace, but a populace, like tyrants, requires buffoons. The king has Roquelaure, and the people has Paillasse. Paris is the great mad city, wherever it is not the great sublime city, and the carnival there is political. Paris let us confess it, willingly allows infamy to play a farce for its amusement, and only asks of its masters—when it has masters—one thing,

ruddle the mud for me. Rome was of the same humor, she loved Nero, and Nero was a Titanic débardeur.

Accident willed it, as we have just said, that one of the shapeless groups of masked men and women collected in a vast barouche, stopped on the left of the boulevard, while the wedding party stopped on the right. The carriage in which the masks were, noticed opposite to it the carriage in which was the bride.

"Hilloh!" said a mask, "a wedding."

"A false wedding," another retorted, "we are the true one."

And, as they were too far off to address the wedding party, and as they also feared the interference of the police, the two masks looked elsewhere. The whole vehicle load had plenty of work a moment after, for the mob began hissing it, which is the caress given by the mob to masquerades, and the two masks who had just spoken were obliged to face the crowd with their comrades, and found the projectiles from the arsenal of the Halles scarce sufficient to reply to the enormous barks of the people. A frightful exchange of metaphors took place between the masks and the crowd. In the meanwhile, two other masks in the same carriage, a Spaniard with an exaggerated nose, an oldish look, and enormous black mustaches, and a thin and very youthful fish-girl, wearing a half mask, had noticed the wedding also, and while their companions and the spectators were insulting each other, held a conversation in a low voice. Their aside was covered by the tumult and was lost in it. The showers had drenched the open carriage, the February wind is not warm, and so the fish-girl, while answering the Spaniard, shivered, laughed, and coughed. This was the dialogue, which we translate from the original slang.

"Look here."

"What is it, pa?"

"Do you see that old man?"

"What old man?"

"There, in the wedding coach with his arm in a sling."

"Yes. Well?"

"I feel sure that I know him."

"Ah!"

"May my neck be cut, and I never said you, thou, or I, in my life, if I do not know that Parisian." \*

"To-day Paris is Pantin."

"Can you see the bride by stooping?"

"No."

"And the bridegroom?"

"There is no bridegroom in that coach."

"Nonsense."

"Unless it be the other old man."

"Come, try and get a look at the bride by stooping."

"I can't."

"No matter, that old fellow who has something the matter with his paw, I feel certain I know him."

"And what good will it do you you knowing him?"

"I don't know. Sometimes!"

"I don't care a curse for old fellows."

"I know him."

"Know him as much as you like."

"How the deuce is he at the wedding?"

"Why we are there too."

"Where does the wedding come from?"

"How do I know?"

"Listen."

"Well, what is it?"

"You must do something."

"What is it?"

"Get out of our trap and follow that wedding."

"What to do?"

"To know where it goes and what it is. Make haste and go down; run, my daughter for you are young."

"I can't leave the carriage."

"Why not?"

"I am hired."

"Oh, the devil!"

"I owe the prefecture my day's work."

"That's true."

"If I leave the carriage the first inspector who sees me will arrest me. You know that."

"Yes, I know it."

"To-day I am bought by Pharos" (the government).

"No matter, that old fellow bothers me."

"All old men bother you, and yet you ain't a chicken yourself."

"He is in the first carriage."

"Well, what then?"

"In the bride's carriage."

"What next?"

"So he is the father."

"How does that concern me?"

\* Je veux qu'on me fauche le colabre et n'avoir de ma vioc dit vousaille, tonorgue ni mézig, il je ne colombe pas ce pantinois-là.

"I tell you he is the father."

"You do nothing but talk about that father."

"Listen."

"Well, what?"

"I can only go away masked, for I am hidden here, and no one knows I am here. But to-morrow there will no masks, for it is Ash Wednesday, and I run a risk of being nailed. I shall be obliged to go back to my hole, but you are free."

"Not quite."

"Well, more so than I am."

"Well, what then?"

"You must try and find out where that wedding party is going to."

"Going to!"

"Yes."

"Oh, I know."

"Where to then?"

"To the Cadran Bleu."

"But that is not the direction."

"Well then! to La Rapée."

"Or elsewhere."

"They can do as they like, for weddings are free."

"That is not the thing. I tell you that you must try and find out for me what that wedding is, and where it comes from."

"Of course! that would be funny. It's so jolly easy to find out a week after where a wedding party has gone to that passed on Shrove Tuesday. A pin in a bundle of hay. Is it possible?"

"No matter, you must try. Do you hear, Azelma?"

The two files recommenced their opposite movement on the boulevard, and the carriage of masks lost out of sight that which contained the bride.

## CHAPTER CCLXVIII.

JEAN VALJEAN STILL HAS HIS ARM IN A SLING.

To realize one's dream—to whom is this granted? There must be elections for this in heaven; we are the unconscious candidates and the angels vote. Cosette and Marius had been elected. Cosette, both at the mayoralty and at church, was brilliant and touching. Toussaint, helped by Nicolette, had dressed her. Cosette wore over a skirt of white taffetas her dress of Bincho

lace, a veil of English point, a necklace of fine pearls, and a crown of orange flowers; all this was white, and in this whiteness she was radiant. It was an exquisite candor expanding and becoming transfigured in lights; she looked like a virgin on the point of becoming a Deess. Marius' fine hair was shining and perfumed, and here and there a glimpse could be caught under the thick curls, of pale lines, which were the scars of the barricade. The grandfather, superb, with head erect, amalgamating in his toilet and manners all the elegances of the time of Barras, gave his arm to Cosette. He took the place of Jean Valjean, who, owing to his wound, could not give his hand to the bride. Jean Valjean, dressed all in black, followed and smiled.

"Monsieur Fauchelevant," the grandfather said to him, "this is a glorious day, and I vote the end of afflictions and cares. Henceforth there must be no sorrow anywhere. By Heaven! I decree joy! misfortune has no right to exist, and it is a disgrace for the azure of heaven that there are unfortunate men. Evil does not come from man, who, at the bottom, is good; but all human miseries have their capital and central government in hell, otherwise called the Tuileries of the devil. There, I am making demagogic remarks at present. For my part I have no political opinions left; and all I stick to is that men should be rich, that is to say, joyous."

When, at the end of all the ceremonies,—after pronouncing before the mayor and before the priest all the yesses possible, after signing the register at the municipality and in the sacristy, after exchanging rings, after kneeling side by side under the canopy of white moire in the smoke of the censer,—they arrived holding each other by the hand, admired and envied by all. Marius in black, she in white, preceded by the beadle in the colonel's epaulettes striking the flag-stones with his halbert, between two rows of dazzled spectators, at the church doors which were thrown wide open, ready to get into their carriage,—and then all was over. Cosette could not yet believe it. She looked at Marius, she looked at the crowd, she looked at heaven, it seemed as if she were afraid of awaking. Her astonished and anxious air imparted something strangely enchanting to her. In returning they both

rode in the same carriage, Marius seated by Cosette's side, and M. Gillenormand and Jean Valjean forming their vis-à-vis. Aunt Gillenormand had fallen back a step and was in the second carriage. "My children," the grandfather said, "you are now M. le Baron and Madame la Baronne, with thirty thousand francs a-year." And Cosette, nuzzling against Marius, caressed his ear with the angelic whisper, "It is true, then, my name is Marius and I am Madame Thou." These two beings were resplendent, they had reached the irrevocable and irrecoverable moment, the dazzling point of intersection of all youth and all joy. They realized Jean Prouvaire's views; together they did not count forty years. It was marriage sublimated; and these two children were two lilies. They did not see each other, but contemplated each other. Cosette perceived Marius in a glory, and Marius perceived Cosette upon an altar. And upon this altar, and in this glory, the two apotheoses blending behind a cloud for Cosette, and a flashing for Marius, there was the ideal thing, the real thing, the meeting-place of kisses and of sleep, the nuptial pillow.

All the torments they had gone through returned to them in intoxication; it appeared to them as if the griefs, the sleeplessness, the tears, the anguish, the terrors, and the despair, by being converted into caresses and sunbeams, rendered more charming still the charming hour which was approaching; and that their sorrows were so many handmaidens who performed the toilette of joy. How good it is to have suffered! their misfortunes made a halo for their happiness, and the long agony of their love ended in an ascension. There was in these two souls the same enchantment, tinged with voluptuousness in Marius, and with modesty in Cosette. They said to each other in a whisper, "We will go and see again our little garden in the Rue Plumet." The folds of Cosette's dress were upon Marius. Such a day is an ineffable blending of dream and certainty: you possess and you suppose, and you still have time before you to divine. It is an indescribable emotion on that day to be at mid-day and think of midnight. The delight of these two hearts overflowed upon the crowd, and imparted merriment to the passers-by. People stopped in the Rue St. Antoine, in front of St. Paul's, to look through the car-

riage-window—the orange flowers trembling on Cosette's head. Then they returned to the Rue de Filles du Calvaire—home. Marius, side by side with Cosette, ascended, triumphantly and radiantly, that staircase up which he had been dragged in a dying state. The beggars, collected before the gate and dividing the contents of their purses, blessed them. There were flowers everywhere, and the house was no less fragrant than the church: after the incense the rose. They fancied they could hear voices singing in infinitude; they had God in their hearts; destiny appeared to them like a ceiling of stars; they saw above their heads the flashing of the rising sun. Marius gazed at Cosette's charming bare arm and the pink things which could be vaguely seen through the lace of the stomacher, and Cosette, catching Marius' glance, blushed to the white of her eyes. A good many old friends of the Gillenormand family had been invited, and they thronged round Cosette, outvying each other in calling her Madame la Baronne. The officer, Theodule Gillenormand, now captain, had come from Chartres, where he was stationed, to be present at his cousin's marriage: Cosette did not recognize him. He, on his side, accustomed to be thought a pretty fellow by the women, remembered Cosette no more than any other.

"How right I was in not believing that story of the lancer's!" Father Gillenormand said to himself aside.

Cosette had never been more affectionate to Jean Valjean, and she was in unison with Father Gillenormand; while he built up joy in aphorisms and maxims, she exhaled love and beauty like a perfume. Happiness wishes everybody to be happy. In talking to Jean Valjean she formed inflections of her voice from the time when she was a little girl, and caressed him with a smile. A banquet had been prepared in the dining-room; an illumination *à giorno* is the necessary seasoning of a great joy, and mist and darkness are not accepted by the happy. They do not consent to be black; night, yes; darkness, no; and if there be no sun, one must be made. The dining-room was a furnace of gay things; in the centre, above the white glistening tables, hung a Venetian chandelier, with all sorts of colored birds, blue, violet, red, and green, perched among the candles; round the chandelier were girandoles, and on

the walls were mirrors with three and four branches; glasses, crystal, plate, china, crockery, gold, and silver, all flashed and rejoiced. The spaces between the candelabra were filled up with bouquets, so that where there was not a light there was a flower. In the ante-room three violins and a flute played some of Haydn's quartettes. Jean Valjean had seated himself on a chair in the drawing-room, behind the door, which, being thrown back, almost concealed him. A few minutes before they sat down to table Cosette gave him a deep courtesy, while spreading out her wedding-dress with both hands, and with a tenderly mocking look, asked him,—

"Father, are you satisfied?"

"Yes," said Jean Valjean, "I am satisfied."

"Well, then, laugh."

Jean Valjean began laughing. A few minutes later Basque came in to announce that dinner was on the table. The guests, preceded by M. Gillenormand, who gave his arm to Cosette, entered the dining-room, and collected round the table in the prescribed order. There was a large easy chair on either side of the bride, one for M. Gillenormand, the other for Jean Valjean. M. Gillenormand seated himself, but the other chair remained empty. All looked round for Monsieur Fauchelevant, but he was no longer there, and M. Gillenormand hailed Basque.

"Do you know where M. Fauchelevant is?"

"Yes, sir, I do," Basque replied. "Monsieur Fauchelevant requested me to tell you, sir, that his hand pained him, and that he could not dine with M. le Baron and Madame la Baronne. He therefore begged to be excused, but would call to-morrow. He has just left."

This empty chair momentarily chilled the effusion of the wedding feast; but though M. Fauchelevant was absent M. Gillenormand was there, and the grandfather shone for two. He declared that M. Fauchelevant acted rightly in going to bed early if he were in pain, but that it was only a small hurt. This declaration was sufficient; besides, what is a dark corner in such a submersion of joy? Cosette and Marius were in one of those egotistic and blessed moments when people possess no other faculty than that of perceiving joy; and then M. Gillenormand had an idea, "By Jupiter! this chair is empty;

come hither, Marius; your aunt, though she has a right to it, will permit you; this chair is for you; it is legal, and it is pretty—Fortunatas by the side of Fortunata." The whole of the guests applauded. Marius took Jean Valjean's place by Cosette's side, and things were so arranged that Cosette, who had at first been saddened by the absence of Jean Valjean, ended by being pleased at it. From the moment when Marius was the substitute Cosette would not have regretted God. She placed her little white satin-slippered foot upon Marius' foot. When the easy chair was occupied M. Fauchelevant was effaced, and nothing was wanting. And five minutes later all the guests were laughing from one end of the table to the other, with all the forgetfulness of humor. At dessert M. Gillenormand rose, with a glass of champagne in his hand, only half full, so that the trembling of ninety-two years might not upset it, and proposed the health of the new-married couple.

"You will not escape from two sermons," he exclaimed; "this morning you had the curé's, and this evening you will have grand-papa's; listen to me, for I am going to give you some advice: Adore each other. I do not beat round the bush, but go straight to the point; be happy. There are no other sages in creation but the turtle-doves. Philosophers say, Moderate your joys. But I say, Throw the bridle on the neck of your joys. Love like fiends, be furious. The philosophers babble, and I should like to thrust their philosophy down their throats for them. Can we have too many perfumes, too many open rosebuds, too many singing nightingales, too many green leaves, and too much dawn in life? can we love too much? can we please one another too much? Take care, Estella, you are too pretty! take care, Nemorin, you are too handsome! What jolly nonsense! can people enchant each other, tease each other and charm each other too much? can they be too loving? can they be too happy? Moderate your joys,—oh stuff! down with the philosophers, for wisdom is jubilation. Do you jubilate? let us jubilate; are we happy because we are good, or are we good because we are happy? Is the Sancy diamond called the Sancy because it belonged to Harley de Sancy, or because it weighs one hundred and six carats? I do not know; and life is full of such problems: the important



thing is to have the Sancy and happiness. Be happy without bargaining, and let us blindly obey the sun. What is the sun ? it is love ; and when I say love, I mean woman. Ah, ah ! woman is an omnipotence. Ask that demagogue, Mr. Marius, if he is not the slave of that little she-tyrant, Cosette ? and willingly so, the coward. Woman ! there is not a Robespierre who can stand, but woman reigns. I am now only a royalist of that royalty. What is Adam ? the royalty of Eve. There is no '89 for Eve. There was the royal sceptre surmounted by the fleur-de-lys, there was the imperial sceptre surmounted by a globe, there was Charlemagne's sceptre of iron, and the sceptre of Louis the Great, which was of gold. The Revolution twisted them between its thumb and forefinger like straws. It is finished, it is broken, it lies on the ground, — there is no sceptre left. But just make a revolution against that little embroidered handkerchief which smells of patchouli ! I should like to see you at it. Try it. Why is it solid ? because it is a rag. Ah ! you are the nineteenth century. Well, what then ? We were the eighteenth, and were as foolish as you. Do not suppose that you have made any tremendous change in the world because your stoop-gallant is called cholera, and your bourraée the cachucha. After all, woman must always be loved, and I defy you to get out of that. These she-devils are our angels. Yes ; love, woman and a kiss, form a circle from which I defy you to issue, and for my own part I should be very glad to enter again. Who among you has seen the star, Venus, the great coquette of the abyss, the Celiméne of ocean rise in infinite space, appeasing everything below her, and looking at the waves like a woman ? The ocean is a rude Alcestes, and yet, however much he may growl, when Venus appears he is forced to smile. That brute-beast submits, and we are all so. Anger, tempest, thunderbolts, foam up to the ceiling. A woman comes upon the stage, a star rises, and you crawl in the dust. Marius was fighting six months ago, and is marrying to-day, and that is well done. Yes, Marius, yes, Cosette, you are right. Exist bravely one for the other, make us burst with rage because we can not do the same, and idolize each other. Take in both your beaks the little straws of felicity which lie on the ground, and make of them a nest for life. By Jove ! to love, to be loved, what a great miracle when a man is

young ! Do not suppose that you invented it. I too have dreamed, and thought, and sighed. I too have a moonlit soul. Love is a child six thousand years of age, and has a right to a long white beard. Methuselah is a baby by the side of Cupid. Sixty centuries back a man and woman got out of the scrape by loving. The devil, who is cunning, took to hating man ; but man, who is more cunning still, took to loving woman. In this way he did himself more good than the devil did him harm. That trick was discovered simultaneously with the terrestrial paradise. My friends, the invention is old, but it is bran new. Take advantage of it ; Daphnis and Chloe while waiting till you are Baucis and Philemon. Manage so that, when you are together, you may want for nothing, and that Cosette may be the sun for Marius, and Marius the universe for Cosette. Cosette, let your fine weather be your husband's smiles. Marius, let your wife's tears be the rain, and mind that it never does rain in your household. You have drawn the good number in the lottery, love in the sacrament. You have the prize number, so keep it carefully under lock and key. Do not squander it. Adore each other and a fig for the rest. Believe what I tell you, then, for it is good sense, and good sense can not deceive. Be to one another a religion, for each man has his own way of adoring God. Saperlotte ! the best way of adoring God is to love one's wife. I love you ! that is my catechism ; and whoever loves is orthodox. The oath of Henry IV. places sanctity between guttling and intoxication. *Ventre Saint Gris* ! I do not belong to the religion of that oath, for woman is forgotten in it, and that surprises me on the part of Henry IV.'s oath. My friends, long live woman ! I am old, so people say, but it is amazing how disposed I feel to be young. I should like to go and listen to the bagpipes in the woods. These children, who succeed in being beautiful and satisfied, intoxicate me. I am quite willing to marry if anybody will have me. It is impossible to imagine that God has made us for anything else than this, to idolize, to purr, to adonize, to be a pigeon, to be a cock, to caress our lovers from morning till night, to admire ourselves in our little wife, to be proud, to be triumphant, and to swell. Such is the object of life. That, without offence, is what we thought in our time, when we were young

men. Ah ! vertubamboché, what charming women there were in those days, what ducks ! I carried out my ravages among them. So love each other. If men and women did not love, I really do not see what use there would be in having a spring. And, for my part, I would pray to le bon Dieu to lock up all the fine things he shows us and take them back from us, and to return to his box the flowers, the birds, and the pretty girls. My children, receive the blessing of an old man."

The evening was lively, gay, and pleasant ; the sovereign good humor of the grandfather gave the tone to the whole festivity, and each was regulated by this almost centenerical cordiality. There was a little dancing, and a good deal of laughter ; it was a merry wedding, to which that worthy old fellow "Once on a time" might have been invited ; however, he was present in the person of Father Gillenormand. There was a tumult, and then a silence ; the married couple had disappeared. A little after midnight the Gillenormand mansion became a temple. Here we stop, for an angel stands on the threshold of wedding-nights, smiling, and with finger on lip ; the mind becomes contemplative before this sanctuary, to which this celebration of love is held. There must be rays of light above, such houses, and the joy which they contain must pass through the walls in brilliancy, and vaguely irradiate the darkness. It is impossible for this sacred and fatal festival not to send a celestial radiance to infinitude. Love is the sublime crucible in which the fusion of man and woman takes place ; the one being, the triple being, the final being, the human trinity issue from it. This birth of two souls in one must have emotion for the shadows. The lover is the priest, and the transported virgin feels an awe. A portion of this joy ascends to God. When there is really marriage, that is to say, when there is love, the ideal is mingled with it, and a nuptial couch forms in the darkness a corner of the dawn. If it was given to the mental eye to perceive the formidable and charming visions of higher life, it is probable that it would see the forms of night, the unknown winged beings, the blue wayfarers of the invisible, bending down round the luminous house, satisfied and blessing, pointing out to each other the virgin bride, who is gently startled, and having the reflection of human felicity on their divine countenances, If, at

this supreme hour, the pair, dazzled with pleasure, and who believe themselves alone, were to listen, they would hear in their chamber a confused rustling of wings, for perfect happiness implies the guarantee of angels. This little obscure alcove has an entire heaven for its ceiling. When two mouths, which have become sacred by love, approach each other in order to create, it is impossible but that there is a tremor in the immense mystery of the stars above this ineffable kiss. These felicities are the real ones, there is no joy beyond their joys, love is the sole ecstasy, and all the rest weeps. To love or to have loved is sufficient ; ask nothing more after that. There is no other pearl to be found in the dark folds of life, for love is a consummation.

## CHAPTER COLXIX.

### IMMORTALE JECUR.

WHAT had become of Jean Valjean ? Directly after he had laughed, in accordance with Cosette's request, as no one was paying any attention to him, Jean Valjean rose, and, unnoticed, reached the ante-room. It was the same room which he had entered eight months previously, black with mud and blood and gunpowder, bringing back the grandson to the grandfather. The old paneling was garlanded with flowers and leaves, the musicians were seated on the sofa upon which Marius had been deposited. Basque, in black coat, knee-breeches, white cravat, and white gloves, was placing wreaths of roses round each of the dishes which was going to be served up. Jean Valjean showed him his arm in the sling, requested him to explain his absence, and quitted the house. The windows of the dining-room looked out on the street, and Valjean stood for some minutes motionless in the obscurity of those radiant windows. He listened, and the confused sound of the banquet reached his ears ; he heard the grandfather's loud and dictatorial voice, the violins, the rattling of plates and glasses, the bursts of laughter, and in all this gay humor he distinguished Cosette's soft, happy voice. He left the Rue des Filles du Calvaire and returned to the Rue de l'Homme Armé. In going home he went along the Rue Saint Louis, the Rue Culture-Saint-Catherine, and the Blancs Manteaux ; it was a little longer, but it was the road by which he had been

accustomed to come with Cosette during the last three months, in order to avoid the crowd and mud of the Rue Vieille du Temple. This road, which Cosette had passed along, excluded the idea of any other itinerary for him. Jean Valjean returned home, lit his candle, and went upstairs. The apartments were empty, and not even Toussaint was in there now. Jean Valjean's footsteps made more noise in the rooms than usual. All the wardrobes were open; he entered Cosette's room and there were no sheets on the bed. The pillow, without a case or lace, was laid on the blankets folded at the foot of the bed, in which no one was going to sleep again. All the small feminine articles to which Cosette clung had been removed: only the heavy furniture and the four walls remained. Toussaint's bed was also unmade, and the only one made which seemed to be expecting somebody was Jean Valjean's. Jean Valjean looked at the walls, closed some of the wardrobe drawers, and walked in and out of the rooms. Then he returned to his own room and placed his candle on the table; he had taken his arm out of the sling and used it as if he were suffering no pain in it. He went up to his bed, and his eyes fell—was it by accident or was it purposely?—on the *inseparable* of which Cosette had been jealous, the little valise which never left him. On June 4th, when he arrived at the Rue de l'Homme Armé, he laid it on a table; he now walked up to this table with some eagerness, took the key out of his pocket, and opened the portmanteau. He slowly drew out the clothes in which, ten years previously, Cosette had left Montfermeil; first the little black dress, then the black handkerchief, then the stout shoes, which Cosette could almost have worn still, so small was her foot; next the petticoat, then the apron, and, lastly, the woollen stockings. These stockings, in which the shape of a little leg was gracefully marked, were no longer than Jean Valjean's hand. All these articles were black, and it was he who took them for her to Montfermeil. He laid each article on the bed as he took it out, and he thought and remembered. It was in winter, a very cold December, she was shivering under her rags, and her poor feet were quite red in her wooden shoes. He, Jean Valjean, had made her take off these rags, and put on this mourning garb; the mother must have been pleased in her tomb to see her daughter

wearing mourning for her, and above all to see that she was well clothed and was warm. He thought of that forest of Montfermeil, he thought of the weather it was, of the trees without leaves, of the wood without birds, and the sky without sun; but no matter, it was charming. He arranged the little clothes on the bed, the handkerchief near the petticoat, the stockings along with the shoes, the apron by the side of the dress, and he looked at them one after the other. She was not much taller than that, she had her large doll in her arms, she put her louis d'or in the pocket of this apron, she laughed, and they walked along holding each other's hand, and she had no one but him in the world.

Then his venerable white head fell on the bed, his old stoical heart broke, his face was buried in Cosette's clothes, and had anyone passed up stairs at that moment he would have heard frightful sobs. The old formidable struggle, of which we have already seen several phases, began again. Jacob only wrestled with the angel for one night. Alas! how many times have we seen Jean Valjean caught round the waist in the darkness by his conscience, and struggling frantically against it. An extraordinary struggle! at certain moments the foot slips, at others, the ground gives way. How many times had that conscience, clinging to the right, strangled and crushed him! how many times had inexorable truth set its foot on his chest! how many times had he, felled by the light, cried for mercy! how many times had that implacable light, illumined within and over him by the bishop, dazzled him when he wished to be blinded! how many times had he risen again in the contest, clung to the rock, supported himself by sophistry, and been dragged through the dust, at one moment throwing his conscience under him, at another thrown by it! how many times, after an equivoque, after the treacherous and specious reasoning of egotism, had he heard his irritated conscience cry in his ears, Tripper! scoundrel! how many times had his refractory thoughts groaned convulsively under the evidence of duty! what secret wounds he had, which he alone felt bleeding! what excommunications there were in his lamentable existence! how many times had he risen, bleeding, mutilated, crushed, enlightened, with despair in his heart and serenity in his soul! and though vanquished, he felt himself the vic-





JEAN VALJEAN AND HIS TREASURE BOX.

tor, and after having dislocated, tortured, and broken him, his conscience erect before him, luminous and tranquil, would say to him,—“Now go in peace!” What a mournful peace, alas! after issuing from such a contest.

This night, however, Jean Valjean felt that he was fighting his last battle. A crushing question presented itself; predestinations are not all straight; they do not develop themselves in a rectilinear avenue before the predestined man; they have blind alleys, zig-zags, awkward corners, and perplexing cross-roads. Jean Valjean was halting at this moment at the most dangerous of these cross-roads. He had reached the supreme crossing of good and evil, and had that gloomy intersection before his eyes. This time again, as had already happened in other painful interludes, two roads presented themselves before him, one tempting, the other terrifying; which should he take? The one which frightened him was counselled by the mysterious pointing hand, which we all perceive every time that we fix our eyes upon the darkness. Jean Valjean had once again a choice between the terrible haven and the smiling snare. Is it true, then? the soul may be cured, but not destiny. What a frightful thing! an incurable destiny! The question which presented itself was this,—In what way was Jean Valjean going to behave to the happiness of Cosette and Marius? That happiness he had willed, he had made; and at this hour, in gazing upon it, he could have the species of satisfaction which a cutler would have who recognized his trade-mark upon a knife, when he drew it all smoking from his chest. Cosette had Marius, Marius possessed Cosette; they possessed every thing, even wealth, and it was his doing. But, now that this happiness existed and was there, how was he, Jean Valjean, to treat it? should he force himself upon it and treat it as if belonging to himself? Doubtless, Cosette was another man's; but should he, Jean Valjean, retain of Cosette all that he could retain? Should he remain the sort of father, scarce seen but respected, which he had hitherto been? should he introduce himself quietly into Cosette's house? should he carry his past to this future without saying a word? should he present himself there as one having a right, and should he sit down, veiled, at this luminous hearth? Should he smilingly

take the hands of these two innocent creatures in his tragic hands? should he place on the andirons of the Gillenormand drawing-room his feet which dragged after them the degrading shadow of the law? Should he render the obscurity on his brow and the cloud on his forehead denser? should he join his catastrophe to their two felicities? should he continue to be silent? in a word, should he be the sinister dumb man of destiny by the side of these two happy beings? We must be accustomed to fatality and to meeting it, to raise our eyes when certain questions appear to us in their terrible nudity. Good and evil are behind this stern note of interrogation. What are you going to do? the sphynx asks. This habit of trial Jean Valjean had, and he looked at the sphynx fixedly, and examined the pitiless problem from all sides. Cosette, that charming existence, was the raft of this shipwrecked man; what should he do, cling to it, or let it go? If he clung to it, he issued from disaster, he remounted to the sunshine, he let the bitter water drip off his clothes and hair, he was saved and lived. Suppose he let it go? then there was an abyss. He thus dolorously held counsel with his thoughts, or, to speak more correctly, he combated; he rushed furiously within himself, at one moment against his will, at another against his convictions. It was fortunate for Jean Valjean that he had been able to weep, for that enlightened him, perhaps. Still, the beginning was stern; a tempest, more furious than that which had formerly forced him to Arras, was let loose within him. The past returned to him in the face of the present; he compared and sobbed. Once the sluice of tears was opened, the despairing man writhed. He felt himself arrested, alas! in the deadly fight between one egotism and one duty. When we thus recoil inch by inch before our ideal, wildly, obstinately, exasperated at yielding, disputing the ground, hoping for a possible flight, and seeking an issue, what a sudden and sinister resistance is the foot of a wall behind us! to feel the sacred shadow forming an obstacle!

Hence we have never finished with our conscience. Make up your mind, Brutus, make up your mind, Cato. It is bottomless, for it is God. You cast into this pit the labor of your whole life, your fortune, your wealth, your success, your liberty, or your country, your comfort, your repose, your joy. More,

more, more! empty the vase, tread over the urn, you must end by throwing in your heart. There is a barrel like this somewhere in the Hades of old. Is it not pardonable to refuse at last? can that which is inexhaustible have any claim? are not endless chains beyond human strength? who then would blame Sisyphus and Jean Valjean for saying, It is enough! The obedience of matter is limited by friction: is there not a limit to the obedience of the soul? If perpetual motion be impossible, why is perpetual devotion demanded? The first step is nothing, it is the last that is difficult. What was the Champ-mathieu affair by the side of Cosette's marriage? what did it bring with it? what is returning to the hulks by the side of entering nothingness? Oh, first step to descend, how gloomy thou art! oh, second step, how black thou art! How could he help turning his head away this time? Martyrdom is a sublimation, a corrosive sublimation, it is a torture which consecrates. A man may consent to it for the first hour; he sits on the throne of red-hot iron, the crown of red-hot iron is placed on his head, he accepts the red-hot globe, he takes the red-hot sceptre, but he still has to don the mantle of flame, and is there not a moment when the miserable flesh revolts and the punishment is fled from? At length Jean Valjean entered the calmness of prostration, he wished, thought over, and considered the alternations, the mysterious balance of light and shadow. Should he force his galleys on these two dazzling children, or consummate his own irremediable destruction? On one side was the sacrifice of Cosette, on the other his own.

On which solution did he decide? what determination did he form? what his mental definitive reply to the incorruptible interrogatory of fatality? what door did he resolve on opening? which side of his life did he make up his mind to close and condemn? amid all those unfathomable precipices that surrounded him, which was his choice? what extremity did he accept? to which of these gulfs did he nod his head? His confusing reverie lasted all night; he remained till daybreak in the same position, leaning over the bed, prostrate beneath the enormity of fate, crushed perhaps, alas! with clenched fists, and arms extended at a right angle like an unnailed crucified man thrown with his face on the ground. He remained thus for

twelve hours, the twelve hours of a long winter's night, frozen, without raising his head or uttering a syllable. He was motionless as a corpse, while his thoughts rolled on the ground or fled away. Sometimes like a hydra, sometimes like the eagle. To see him thus you would have thought him a dead man; but all at once he started convulsively, and his mouth pressed to Cosette's clothes, kissed them; then you could see that he was alive.

## CHAPTER CCLXX.

### THE SEVENTH CIRCLE AND THE EIGHTH HEAVEN.

THE day after a wedding is solitary, for people respect the retirement of the happy, and to some extent their lengthened slumbers. The confusion of visits and congratulations does not begin again till a later date. On the morning of Feb. 17 it was a little past midday when Basque, with napkin and feather-brush under his arm, was dusting the ante-room, when he heard a low tap at the door. There had not been a ring, which is discreet on such a day. Basque opened and saw M. Fauchelevent; he conducted him to the drawing-room, which was still in great confusion, and looked like the battlefield of the previous day's joys.

"Really, sir, observed Basque, "we woke late."

"Is your master up?" Jean Valjean asked.

"How is your hand, sir?" Basque replied.

"Better. Is your master up?"

"Which one? the old or the new?"

"Monsier Pontmercy."

"Monsieur le Baron!" said Basque, drawing himself up."

A baron is before all a baron to his servants; a portion of it comes to them, and they have what a philosopher would call the splashing of the title, and that flatters them. Marius, we may mention in passing, a militant republican as he had proved, was now a baron, in spite of himself. A little revolution had taken place in the family with reference to this title, it was M. Gillenormand who was attached to it, and Marius who threw it off. But Colonel Pontmercy had written, "*My son will bear my title,*" and Marius obeyed. And then Cosette, in whom

the woman was beginning to germinate, was delighted at being a baroness.

"Monsieur le Baron?" repeated Basque, "I will go and see. I will tell him that Monsieur Fauchelevent is here."

"No, do not tell him it is I. Tell him that some one wishes to speak to him privately, and do not mention my name."

"Ah!" said Basque.

"I wish to surprise him."

"Ah!" Basque repeated, giving himself his second 'Ah!' as an explanation of the first.

And he left the room, and Jean Valjean remained alone. The drawing-room, as we said, was all in disorder, and it seemed as if you could still hear the vague rumor of the wedding. On the floor were all sorts of flowers, which had fallen from garlands and head-dresses, and the candles burned down to the socket added wax stalactites to the crystal of the lustres. Not an article of furniture was in its place; in the corner three or four easy chairs, drawn close together, and forming a circle, looked as if they were continuing a conversation. The *ensemble* was laughing, for there is a certain grace left in a dead festival, for it has been happy. Upon those disarranged chairs, amid those fading flowers, and under those extinguished lamps, persons have thought of joy. The sun succeeded the chandelier, and gayly entered the drawing-room. A few moments passed, during which Jean Valjean remained motionless at the spot where Basque left him. His eyes were hollow, and so sunk in their sockets by sleeplessness that they almost disappeared. His black coat displayed the fatigued creases of a coat which has been up all night, and the elbows were white with that down which friction with linen leaves on cloth. Jean Valjean looked at the window designed on the floor at his feet by the sun. There was a noise at the door, and he raised his eyes. Marius came in with head erect, laughing mouth, a peculiar light over his face, a smooth forehead, and a flashing eye. He, too, had not slept either.

"It is you, father!" he exclaimed, on perceiving Jean Valjean, "why that ass Basque affected the mysterious. But you have come too early, it is only half-past twelve, and Cosette is asleep."

"That word, father, addressed to M.

Fauchelevent by Marius, signified supreme felicity. There had always been, as we know, an escarpment, a coldness, and constraint between them; ice to melt or break. Marius was so intoxicated that the escarpment sank, the ice dissolved, and M. Fauchelevent was for him, as for Cosette, a father. He continued, the words overflowed with him, which is peculiar to these divine paroxysms of joy,—

"How delighted I am to see you! if you only knew how we missed you yesterday! Good day, father; how is your hand? better, is it not?"

And, satisfied with the favorable answer which he gave himself, he went on,—

"We both spoke about you, for Cosette loves you so dearly. You will not forget that you have a room here, for we will not hear a word about the Rue de l'Homme Armé. I do not know how you were able to live in that street, which is sick, and mean, and poor, which has a barrier at one end, where you feel cold, and which no one can enter! You will come and install yourself here, and from to-day, or else you will have to settle with Cosette. She intends to lead us both by the nose, I warn you. You have seen your room, it is close to ours, and looks out on the gardens: we have had the lock mended, the bed is made, it is all ready, and you have only to move in. Cosette has placed close to your bed a large old easy chair of Utrecht velvet, to which she said, 'Hold out your arms to him!' Every spring a nightingale comes to the clump of acacias which faces your windows, and you will have it in two months. You will have its nest on your left and ours on your right; at night it will sing, and by day Cosette will talk. Your room faces due south; Cosette will arrange your books in it, the *Travels of Captain Cook*, and the other, *Vancouver's Travels*, and all your matters. There is, I believe, a valise to which you are attached, and I have arranged a corner of honor for it. You have won my grandfather, for you suit him: we will live together. Do you know whist? you will overwhelm my grandfather if you are acquainted with whist. You will take Cosette for a walk on the days when I go to the courts; you will give her your arm, as you used to do, you remember, formerly at the Luxembourg. We are absolutely determined to be very happy, and you will share in our



happiness, do you hear, papa? By the bye, you will breakfast with us this morning?"

"I have one thing to remark to you, sir," said Jean Valjean; I am an ex-convict."

The limit of the perceptible acute sounds may be as well exceeded for the mind as for the ear. These words, "*I am an ex-convict*," coming from M. Fauchelevant's mouth and entering Marius's ear, went beyond possibility. Marius did not hear: it seemed to him as if something had been just said to him, but he knew not what. He stood with gaping mouth. Jean Valjean unfastened the black handkerchief that supported his right arm, undid the linen rolled round his hand, bared his thumb, and showed it to Marius.

"I have nothing the matter with my hand," he said.

Marius looked at the thumb.

"There was never anything the matter with it," Jean Valjean added.

There was, in fact, no sign of a wound. Jean Valjean continued,—

"It was proper that I should be absent from your marriage, and I was so far as I could. I feigned this wound in order not to commit a forgery, and render the marriage-deeds null and void."

Marius stammered,—

"What does this mean?"

"It means," Jean Valjean replied, "that I have been to the galleys."

"You are driving me mad," said the horrified Marius.

"Monsieur Pontmercy," said Jean Valjean, "I was nineteen years at the galleys for robbery. Then I was sentenced to them for life, for robbery and a second offence. At the present moment I am an escaped convict."

Although Marius recoiled before the reality, refused the facts, and resisted the evidence, he was obliged to yield to it. He was beginning to understand, and as always happens in such a case, he understood too much. He had the shudder of a hideous internal flash: and an idea that made him shudder crossed his mind. He foresaw a frightful destiny for himself in the future.

"Say all, say all," he exclaimed, "you are Cosette's father!"

And he fell back two steps, with a movement of indescribable horror. Jean Valjean threw up his head with such a majestic attitude that he seemed to rise to the ceiling.

"It is necessary that you should believe me here, sir, although the oath of men like us is not taken in a court of justice—"

Here there was a silence, and then with a sort of sovereign and sepulchral authority, he added, speaking slowly and laying a stress on the syllables,—

"You will believe me, I, Cosette's father! Before Heaven, no, Monsieur le Baron Pontmercy. I am a peasant of Faverolles, and earned my livelihood by pruning trees. My name is not Fauchelevant, but Jean Valjean. I am nothing to Cosette, so reassure yourself."

Marius stammered,—

"Who proves it to me?"

"I do, since I say it."

Marius looked at this man: he was mournful and calm, and no falsehood could issue from such calmness. What is frozen is sincere, and the truth could be felt in this coldness of the tomb.

"I do believe you," said Marius.

Jean Valjean bowed his head, as if to note the fact, and continued,—

"What am I to Cosette? a passer-by. Ten years ago I did not know that she existed. I love her, it is true, for men love a child which they have seen little when old themselves; when a man is old he feels like a grandfather to all little children. You can, I suppose, imagine that I have something which resembles a heart. She was an orphan, without father or mother, and needed me, and that is why I came to love her. Children are so weak that the first-comer, even a man like myself, may be their protector. I performed this duty to Cosette. I cannot suppose that so small a thing can be called a good action: but if it be one, well assume that I had done it. Record that extenuating fact. To-day Cosette leaves my life, and our two roads separate. Henceforth I can do no more for her; she is Madame Pontmercy; her providence has changed, and she has gained by the change, so all is well. As for the six hundred thousand francs, you say nothing of them, but I will meet your thought half way: they are a deposit. How was it placed in my hands? no matter. I give up the deposit, and there is nothing more to ask of me. I complete the restitution by stating my real name, and this too concerns myself, for I am anxious that you should know who I am."

And Jean Valjean looked Marius in the face. All that Marius experienced was tumultuous and incoherent, for certain blasts of the wind of destiny produce such waves in our soul. We have all had such moments of trouble in which everything is dispersed within us; we say the first things that occur to us, which are not always precisely those which we ought to say. There are sudden revelations which we cannot bear, and which intoxicate like a potent wine. Marius was stupefied by the new situation which appeared to him, and spoke to this man almost as if he were angry at the avowal.

"But why," he exclaimed, "do you tell me all this? who forces you to do so? you might have kept your secret to yourself. You are neither denounced, nor pursued, nor tracked. You have a motive for making the revelation so voluntarily. Continue; there is something else: for what purpose do you make this confession? for what motive?"

"For what motive?" Jean Valjean answered in a voice so low and dull that it seemed as if he were speaking to himself rather than Marius. "For what motive? in truth, does this convict come here to say, I am a convict, well, yes, the motive is a strange one: it is through honesty. The misfortune is that I have a thread in my heart which holds me fast, and it is especially when a man is old that these threads are most solid. The whole of life is undone around, but they resist. Had I been enabled to tear away that thread, break it, unfasten or cut the knot, and go a long way off, I would be saved and needed only to start. There are diligences in the Rue du Bouloy; you are happy, and I am off. I tried to break that thread. I pulled at it, it held out, it did not break, and I pulled out my heart with it. Then I said, I cannot not live anywhere else, and must remain. Well, yes, but you are right. I am an ass; why not remain simply? You offer me a bedroom in the house. Madame Pontmercy loves me dearly, she said to that fanteuil, Hold out your arms to him; your grandfather asks nothing better than to have me. I suit him, we will live all together, have our meals in common, I will give my arm to Cosette, to Madame Pontmercy, forgive me, but it is habit, we will have only one roof, one table, one fire, the same chimney-corner in winter, the same walk in summer: that is joy, that is happiness,

that is everything. We will live in one family."

At this word, Jean Valjean became fierce. He folded his arms looked at the board at his feet, as if he wished to dig a pit in it, and his voice suddenly became loud.

"In one family? no. I belong to no family, I do not belong to yours, I do not even belong to the human family. In houses where people are together I am in the way. There are families, but none for me: I am the unhappy man, I am outside. Had I a father and mother? I almost doubt it. On the day when I gave you that child in marriage, it was all ended; I saw her happy, and that she was with the man she loved, that there is a kind old gentleman here, a household of two angels, and every joy in this house, and I said to myself, Do not enter. I could lie, it is true, deceive you all, and remain Monsieur Fauchelevent: so long as it was for her, I was able to lie, but now that it would be for myself I ought not to do so. I only required to be silent, it is true, and all would have gone on. You ask me what compels me to speak? a strange sort of thing, my conscience. It would have been very easy, however, to hold my tongue; I spent the night in trying to persuade myself into it. You are shriving me, and what I have just told you is so extraordinary, that you have the right to do so. Well, yes, I spent the night in giving myself reasons. I gave myself excellent reasons, I did what I could. But there are two things in which I could not succeed; I could neither break the string which holds me by the heart, fixed, sealed, and riveted here, nor silence some one who speaks to me in a low voice when I am alone. That is what I have come to confess all to you this morning,—all, or nearly all, for it is useless to tell what only concerns myself, and that I keep to myself. You know the essential thing. I took my mystery, then, and brought it to you, and ripped it up before your eyes. It was not an easy resolution to form, and I debated the point the whole night. Ah! you may fancy that I did not say to myself that this was not the Champmathieu affair, that in hiding my name I did no one any harm, that the name of Fauchelevent was given me by Fauchelevent himself in gratitude for a service rendered, and that I might fairly keep it, and that I should be happy in this room which you offer me, that I should not be at

all in the way, that I should be in my little corner, and that while you had Cosette I should have the idea of being in the same house with her; each would have his proportioned happiness. Continuing to be Monsieur Fauchelevent arranged everything. Yes, except my soul; there would be joy all over me, but the bottom of my soul would remain black. Thus I should have remained Monsieur Fauchelevent. I should have hidden my real face in the presence of your happiness; I should have had an enigma, and in the presence of your broad sunshine I should have had darkness; thus, without crying 'Look out,' I should have introduced the hulks to your hearth, I should have sat down at your table with the thought, that if you knew who I was you would expel me; and let myself be served by the servants, who, had they known, would have said, 'What a horror!' I should have touched you with my elbow, which you have a right to feel offended at, and swindled you out of shakes of the hand. There would have been in your house a divided respect between venerable gray hairs and branded gray hairs; in your most intimate hours, when all hearts formed themselves to each other, when we were all four together, the grandfather, you two, and I, there would have been a stranger there. Hence I, a dead man, would have imposed myself on you who are living, and I should have sentenced her for life. You, Cosette, and I would have been three heads in the green cap! Do you not shudder? I am only the most crushed of men, but I should have been the most monstrous. And this crime I should have committed daily! and this falsehood I should have told daily! and this face of night should have worn daily! and I should have given you a share in my stigma daily, to you, my beloved, to you, my children, to you, my innocents. Holding one's tongue is nothing? keeping silence is simple? no, it is not simple, for their is a silence which lies, and my falsehood, and my fraud, and my indignity, and my cowardice, and my treachery, and my crime, I should have drunk drop by drop; I should have spat it out, and thus drunk it again; I should have ended at midnight and begun again at midday, and my good day would have lied, and my good night would have lied, and I should have slept upon it, and eaten it with my bread; and I should have looked at Cosette, and responded

to the smile of the angel with the smile of the condemned man, and I should have been an abominable scoundrel, and for what purpose? to be happy. I happy! have I the right to be happy? I am out of life, sir."

Jean Valjean stopped, and Marius listened, but such enchainments of ideas and agonies cannot be interrupted. Jean Valjean lowered his voice again, but it was no longer the dull voice, but the sinister voice.

"You ask why I speak? I am neither denounced, nor pursued, nor tracked, you say. Yes, I am denounced! Yes, I am pursued! Yes, I am tracked! By whom? by myself. It is I who bar my own passage, and I drag myself along, and I push myself, and I arrest myself, and execute myself, and when a man holds himself he is securely held."

And, seizing his own collar, and dragging it toward Marius, he continued,—

"Look at this fist. Do you not think that it holds this collar so as not to let it go? Well, conscience is a very different hand! If you wish to be happy, sir, you must never understand duty; for so soon as you have understood it, it is implacable. People may say that it punishes you for understanding it; but no, it rewards you for it, for it places you in a hell where you feel God by your side. A man has no sooner torn his entrails than he is at peace with himself."

And with an indescribable accent, he added,—

"Monsieur Pontmercy, that has no common sense. I am an honest man. It is by degrading myself in your eyes that I raise myself in my own. This has happened to me once before, but it was less painful; it was nothing. Yes, an honest man. I should not be one if you had, through my fault, continued to esteem me; but now that you despise me I am so. I have this fatality upon me, that as I am never able to have any but stolen consideration, this consideration humiliates and crushes me internally; and in order that I may respect myself people must despise me. Then I draw myself up. I am a galley-slave who obeys his conscience. I know very well that this is not likely, but what would you have me do? it is so. I have made engagements with myself, and keep them. There are meetings which bind us. There are accidents which drag us into duty. Look you, Monsieur Pontmercy, things have happened to me in my life."

Jean Valjean made another pause, swallowing his saliva with an effort, as if his words had a bitter after-taste, and he continued,—

“When a man has such a horror upon him, he has no right to make others share it unconsciously, he has no right to communicate his plague to them, he has no right to make them slip over his precipice without their perceiving it, he has no right to drag his red cap over them, and no right craftily to encumber the happiness of another man with his misery. To approach those who are healthy and touch them in the darkness with his invisible ulcer is hideous. Fauchelevent may have lent me his name, but I have no right to use it; he may have given it to me, but I was unable to take it. A name is a self. Look you, sir, I have thought a little and read a little, though I am a peasant; and you see that I express myself properly. I explain things to myself, and have carried out my own education. Well, yes; to abstract a name and place one’s self under it, is dishonest. The letters of the alphabet may be filched like a purse or a watch. To be a false signature in flesh and blood, to be a living false key, to enter among honest folk by picking their lock, never to look, but always to squint, to be internally infamous,—no! no! no! no! It is better to suffer, bleed, weep, tear one’s flesh with one’s nails, pass the nights writhing in agony, and gnaw one’s stomach and soul. That is why I have come to tell you all this,—voluntarily, as you remarked.”

He breathed painfully, and uttered this last remark,—

“Formerly I stole a loaf in order to live; to-day I will not steal a name in order to live.”

“To live!” Marius interrupted, “you do not require that name to live.”

“Ah! I understand myself,” Jean Valjean replied, raising and drooping his head several times in succession. There was a silence; both held their tongues, sunk as they were in a gulf of thought. Marius was sitting near a table, and supporting the corner of his mouth on one of his fingers. Jean Valjean walked backwards and forwards; he stopped before a glass and remained motionless. Then as if answering some internal reasoning, he said as he looked in this glass, in which he did not see himself,—

“While at present I am relieved.”

He began walking again, and went to the

other end of the room. At the moment when he turned he perceived that Marius was watching his walk, and he said to him, with an indescribable accent,—

“I drag my leg a little. You understand why now.”

Then he turned round full to Marius.

“And now, sir, imagine this. I have said nothing. I have remained Monsieur Fauchelevent. I have taken my place in your house. I am one of your family. I am in my room. I come down to breakfast in my slippers; at night we go to the play, all three. I accompany Madame Pontmercy to the Tuileries and to the Place Royale; we are together, and you believe me your equal. One fine day I am here, you are there. We are talking and laughing, and you hear a voice cry this name,—Jean Valjean! and then that fearful hand, the police, issues from the shadow, and suddenly tears off my mask!”

He was silent again. Marius had risen with a shudder, and Jean Valjean continued,—

“What do you say that?”

Marius’ silence replied, and Jean Valjean continued,—

“You see very well that I did right in not holding my tongue. Be happy, be in heaven, be the angel of an angel, be in the sunshine and content yourself with it, and do not trouble yourself as to the way in which a poor condemned man opens his heart and does his duty: you have a wretched man before you, sir.”

Marius slowly crossed the room, and when he was by Jean Valjean’s side offered him his hand. But Marius was compelled to take this hand which did not offer itself. Jean Valjean let him do so, and it seemed to Marius that he was pressing a hand of marble.

“My grandfather has friends,” said Marius. “I will obtain your pardon.”

“It is useless,” Jean Valjean replied; “I am supposed to be dead, and that is sufficient. The dead are not subjected to surveillance, and are supposed to rot quietly. Death is the same thing as a pardon.”

And liberating the hand which Marius held, he added with a sort of inexorable dignity,—

“Moreover, duty, my duty, is the friend to whom I have recourse, and I only need one pardon, that of my conscience.”

At this moment the door opened gently at the other end of the drawing-room, and Cosette's head appeared in the crevice. Only her sweet face was visible. Her hair was in admirable confusion, and her eyelids were still swollen with sleep. She made the movement of a bird thrusting its head out of the nest, looked first at her husband and then at Jean Valjean, and cried to them laughingly—it looked like a smile issuing from a rose,—

"I will bet that you are talking politics. How stupid that is, instead of being with me!"

Jean Valjean started.

"Cosette," Marius stammered, and he stopped. They looked like two culprits; Cosette, radiant, continued to look at them both, and there were in her eyes gleams of Paradise.

"I have caught you in the act," Cosette said, "I just heard through this, Father Fauchelevant saying, Conscience, doing one's duty. That is politics, and I will have none of it. People must not talk politics on the very next day, it is not right."

"You are mistaken, Cosette," Marius replied, "we are talking of business. We are talking about the best way of investing your six hundred thousand francs."

"I am coming," Cosette interrupted. "Do you want me here?"

And resolutely passing through the door, she entered the drawing-room. She was dressed in a large combing gown with a thousand folds and large sleeves, which descended from her neck to her feet. There are in the golden skies of old gothic paintings, these charming bags to place an angel in. She contemplated herself from head to foot in a large mirror, and then exclaimed with an ineffable outburst of ecstasy,—

"There were once upon a time a king and queen. Oh! how delighted I am!"

This said, she courtesied to Marius and Jean Valjean.

"Then," she said, "I am going to install myself near you in an easy chair; we shall breakfast in half an hour. You will say all you like, for I know very well that gentlemen must talk, and I will be very good."

Marius took her by the arm and said to her, lovingly,—

"We are talking about business."

"By the way," Cosette answered, "I have

opened my window, and a number of sparrows (pierrots) have just entered the garden. Birds, not masks. To-day is Ash Wednesday, but not for the birds."

"I tell you that we are talking of business, so go, my little Cosette, leave us for a moment. We are talking figures, and they would only annoy you."

"You have put on a charming cravat this morning, Marius. You are very coquettish, monseigneur. No, they will not annoy me."

"I assure you that they will."

"No, since it is you, I shall not understand you, but I shall hear you. When a woman hears voices she loves, she does not require to understand the words they say. To be together is all I want, and I shall stay with you—there!"

"You are my beloved Cosette! impossible."

"Impossible!"

"Yes."

"Very good," Cosette remarked, "I should have told you some news. I should have told you that grandpapa is still asleep, that your aunt is at mass, that the chimney of my papa Fauchelevant's room smokes, that Nicolette has sent for the chimney-sweep, that Nicolette and Toussaint have already quarrelled, and that Nicolette ridicules Toussaint's stammering. Well, you shall know nothing. Ah, it is impossible? you shall see, sir, that in my turn I shall say, It is impossible. Who will be caught then? I implore you, my little Marius, to let me stay with you two."

"I assure you that we must be alone."

"Well, I am nobody."

Jean Valjean did not utter a word, and Cosette turned to him.

"In the first place, father, I insist on your coming and kissing me. What do you mean by saying nothing, instead of taking my part? Did one ever see a father like that? That will show you how unhappy my marriage is, for my husband beats me. Come and kiss me at once."

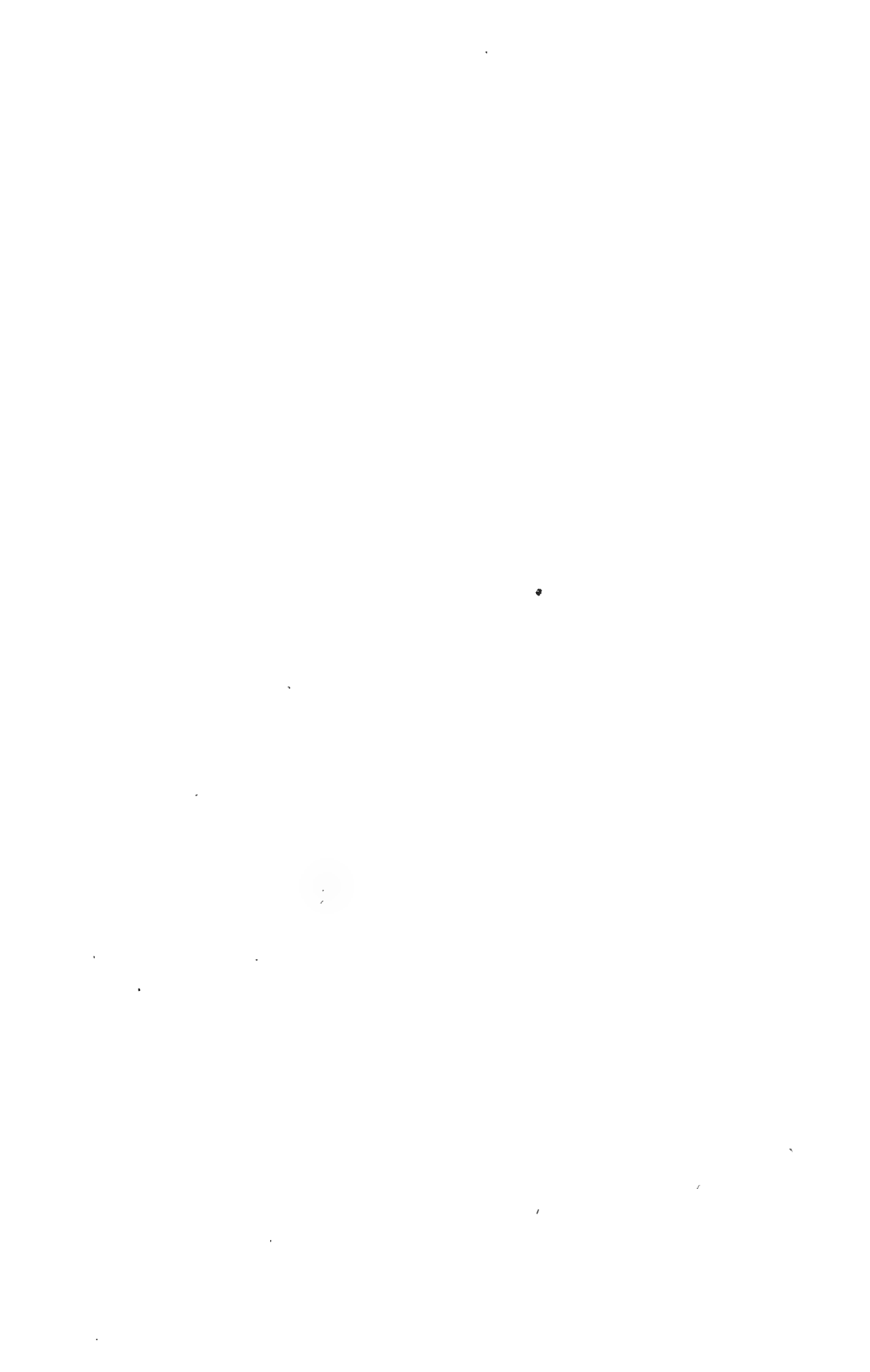
Jean Valjean approached her, and Cosette turned to Marius.

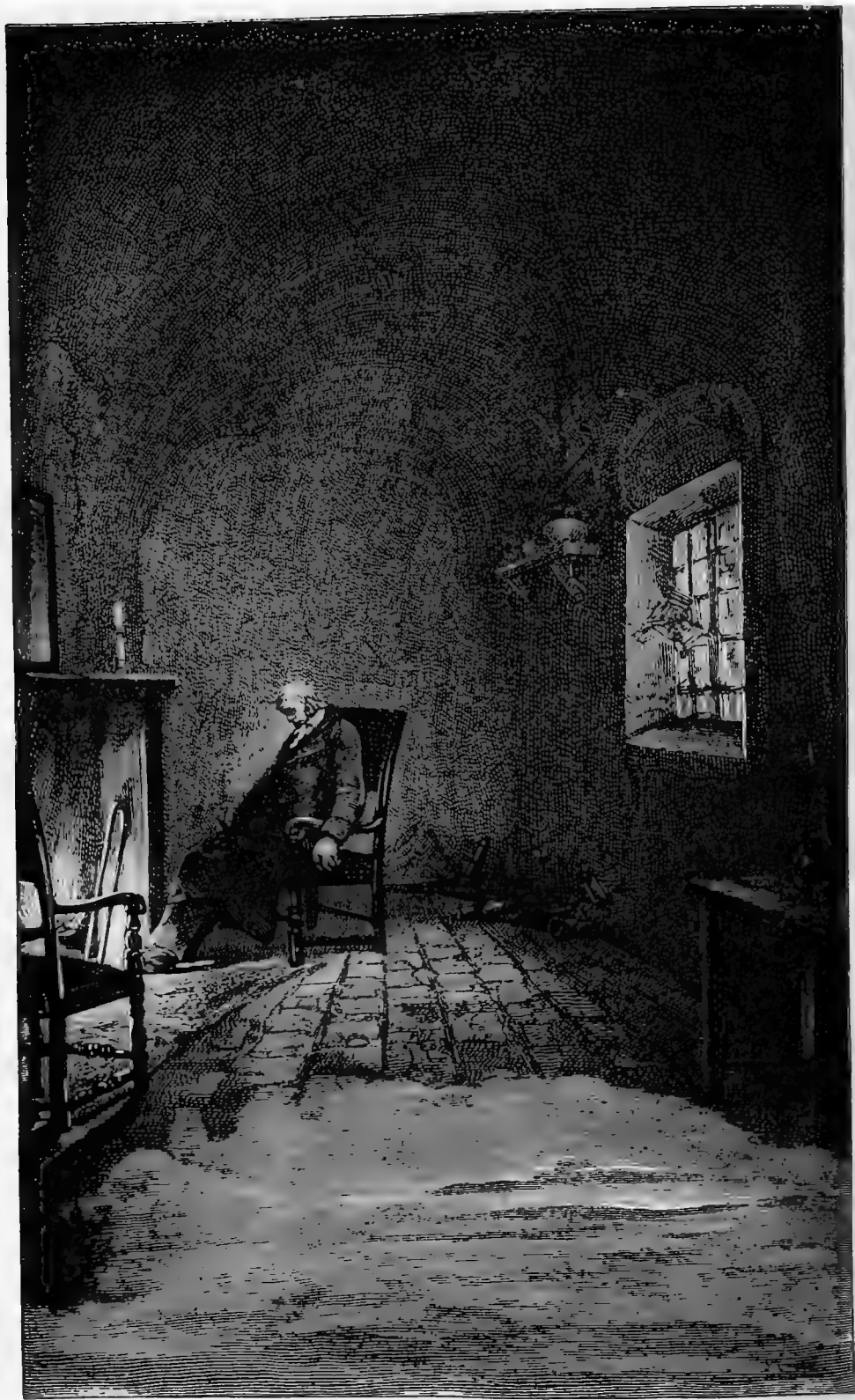
"I make a face at you."

Then she offered her forehead to Jean Valjean, who moved a step towards her. All at once Cosette recoiled.

"Father, you are pale, does your arm pain you?"

"It is cured," said Jean Valjean.





"Have you slept badly?"

"No."

"Are you sad?"

"No."

"Kiss me. If you are well, if you sleep soundly, if you are happy, I will not scold you."

And she again offered him her forehead, and Jean Valjean set a kiss on this forehead, upon which there was a heavenly reflection.

"Smile."

Jean Valjean obeyed, but it was the smile of a ghost.

"Now, defend me against my husband."

"Cosette—" said Marius.

"Be angry, father, and tell him I am to remain. You can talk before me. You must think me very foolish. What are you saying is very astonishing then! business, placing money in a bank, that is a great thing. Men make mysteries of nothing. I mean to say I am very pretty this morning. Marius, look at me."

And with an adorable shrug of the shoulders and an exquisite pout, she looked at Marius. Something like a flash passed between these two beings, and they cared little about a third party being present.

"I love you," said Marius.

"I adore you," said Cosette.

And they irresistibly fell into each other's arms.

"And now," Cosette continued, as she smoothed a crease in her dressing gown, with a little triumphant pout, "I remain."

"No," Marius replied, imploringly, "we have something to finish."

"Again, no?"

Marius assumed a serious tone.

"I assure you, Cosette, that it is impossible."

"Ah, you are putting on your man's voice, sir; very good, I will go. You did not support me, father; and so you, my hard husband, and you, my dear papa, are tyrants. I shall go and tell grandpapa. If you believe that I intend to return and talk platitudes to you, you are mistaken. I am proud, and I intend to wait for you at present. You will see how wearisome it will be without me. I am going, very good."

And she left the room, but two seconds after the door opened again, her fresh, rosy face passed once again between the two folding doors, and she cried to them,—

"I am very angry."

The door closed again, and darkness returned. It was like a straggling sunbeam, which, without suspecting it, had suddenly traversed the night. Marius assured himself that the door was really closed.

"Poor Cosette," he muttered, "when she learns—"

At these words Jean Valjean trembled all over, and he fixed his haggard eyes on Marius.

"Cosette! oh yes, it is true! You will tell Cosette about it. It is fair. Stay, I did not think of that. A man has strength for one thing, but not for another. I implore you, sir, I conjure you, sir, give me your most sacred word, do not tell her. Is it not sufficient for you to know it? I was able to tell it of my own accord, without being compelled. I would have told it to the universe, to the whole world, and I should not have cared; but she, she does not know what it is, and it would horrify her. A convict, what! you would be obliged to explain to her; tell her, It is a man who has been to the galleys. She saw the chain-gang once; oh, my God!"

He sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands; it could not be heard, but from the heaving of his shoulders it could be seen that he was weeping. They were silent tears, terrible tears. There is a choking in a sob; a species of convulsion seized on him, he threw himself back in the chair, letting his arms hang, and displaying to Marius his face bathed in tears, and Marius heard him mutter so low that his voice seemed to come from a bottomless abyss, "Oh! I would like to die!"

"Be at your ease," Marius said, "I will keep your secret to myself."

And less affected than perhaps he ought to have been, but compelled for more than an hour to listen to unexpected horrors, gradually seeing a convict taking M. Fauchelevent's place, gradually overcome by this mournful reality, and led by the natural state of the situation to notice the gap which had formed between himself and this man, Marius added,—

"It is impossible for me not to say a word about the trust money which you have so faithfully and honestly given up. That is an act of probity, and it is but fair that a reward should be given to you; fix the sum yourself, and it shall be paid you. Do not fear to fix it very high."

"I thank you, sir," Jean Valjean replied gently.



"He remained pensive for a moment, mechanically passing the end of his forefinger over his thumb-nail, and then raised his voice,—

"All is nearly finished; there is only one thing left me."

"What is it?"

Jean Valjean had a species of supreme agitation, and voicelessly, almost breathlessly, he stammered, rather than said,—

"Now that you know, do you, sir, who are the master, believe that I ought not to see Cosette again?"

"I believe that it would be better," Marius replied coldly.

"I will not see her again," Jean Valjean murmured. And he walked toward the door; he placed his hand upon the handle, the door opened, Jean Valjean was going to pass out, when he suddenly closed it again, then opened the door again, and returned to Marius. He was no longer pale, but livid, and in his eyes was a sort of tragic flame, instead of tears. His voice had grown strangely calm again.

"Stay, sir," he said, "if you like I will come to see her, for I assure you that I desire it greatly. If I had not longed to see Cosette I should not have made you the confession I have done, but have gone away; but wishing to remain at the spot where Cosette is, and continue to see her, I was obliged to tell you everything honestly. You follow my reasoning, do you not? it is a thing easy to understand. Look you, I have had her with me for nine years: we lived at first in that hovel on the boulevard, then in the convent, and then near the Luxembourg. It was there that you saw her for the first time, and you remember her blue plush bonnet. Next we went to the district of the Invalides, where there were a railway and a garden, the Rue Plumet. I lived in a little back-yard where I could hear her pianoforte. Such was my life, and we never separated. That lasted nine years and seven months; I was like her father, and she was my child. I do not know whether you understand me, M. Pontmercy, but it would be difficult to go away now, see her no more, speak to her no more, and have nothing left. If you have no objection I will come and see Cosette every now and then, but not too often, and I will not remain long. You can tell them to show me into the little room on the ground-floor; I would certainly come in by the back door, which is used

by the servants, but that might cause surprise, so it is better, I think, for me to come to the front door. Really, sir, I should like to see Cosette a little, but as rarely as you please. Put yourself in my place, I have only that left. And then, again, we must be careful, and if I did not come at all it would have a bad effect, and appear singular. For instance, what I can do is to come in the evening, when it is beginning to grow dark."

"You can come every evening," said Marius, "and Cosette will expect you."

"You are kind, sir," said Jean Valjean.

Marius bowed to Jean Valjean, happiness accompanied despair to the door, and these two men parted.

## CHAPTER CCLXXI.

### THE OBSCURITY WHICH A REVELATION MAY CONTAIN.

MARIUS was overwhelmed; the sort of estrangement which he had ever felt for the man with whom he saw Cosette was henceforth explained. There was in this person something enigmatic, against which his instinct warned him. This enigma was the most hideous of shames, the galleys. This M. Fauchelevent was Jean Valjean, the convict. To find suddenly such a secret in the midst of his happiness is like discovering a scorpion in a turtle-dove's nest. Was the happiness of Marius and Cosette in future condensed to this proximity? was it an accomplished fact? did the acceptance of this man form part of the consummated marriage? could nothing else be done? Had Marius also married the convict? Although a man may be crowned with light and joy, though he be enjoying the grand hour of life's purple, happy love, such shocks would compel even the arch-angel in his ecstasy, even the demi-god in his glory, to shudder.

As ever happens in sudden transformation-scenes of this nature, Marius asked himself whether he ought not to reproach himself? Had he failed in divination? Had he been deficient in prudence? Had he voluntarily been headstrong? slightly so, perhaps. Had he entered without taking sufficient precaution to light up the vicinity, upon this love-adventure, which resulted in his marriage with Cosette? He verified—it is thus, by a

series of verifications of ourselves on ourselves that life is gradually corrected—he verified, we say, the visionary and chimerical side of his nature, a sort of internal cloud peculiar to many organizations, and which in the paroxysms of passion and grief, as the temperature of the soul changes, invades the entire man to such an extent that he merely becomes a conscience enveloped in a fog. He remembered that during the intoxication of his love in the Rue Plumet, during those six or seven ecstatic weeks, he had not even spoken to Cosette about the drama in the Gorbeau hovel, during which the victim was so strangely silent both in the struggle and eventual escape. How was it that he had not spoken to Cosette about it? and yet it was so close and so frightful! how was it that he had not even mentioned the Thénardiens, and especially on the day when he met Eponine? he found almost a difficulty in explaining to himself now his silence at that period, but he was able to account for it. He remembered his confusion, his intoxication for Cosette, his love absorbing everything, the carrying off of one by the other into the ideal world, and perhaps, too, as the imperceptible amount of reason mingled with that violent and charming state of mind, a vague and dull instinct to hide and efface in his memory that formidable adventure with which he feared contact, in which he wished to play no part, from which he stood aloof, and of which he could not be narrator or witness without being an accuser. Moreover, these few weeks had been a flash, and they had formed him for nothing, save loving. In short, when all was revolved, and everything examined, supposing that he had described the Gorbeau trap to Cosette, had mentioned the Thénardiens to her, what would have been the consequence, even if he had discovered that Jean Valjean was a convict; would that have changed him, Marius or his Cosette? would he have drawn back? would he have loved her less? would he have refused to marry her? No. Would it have made any change in what had happened? No. There was nothing, therefore, to regret, nothing to reproach, and all was well. There is a God for those drunkards, who are called lovers, and Marius had blindly followed the road which he had selected with his eyes open. Love had bandaged his eyes to lead him whither?—to paradise.

But this paradise was henceforth compli-

cated by an infernal proximity, and the old estrangement of Marius for this man, for this Fauchelevent who had become Jean Valjean, was at present mingled with horror, but in this horror, let us say it, there was some pity, and even a certain degree of surprise. This robber, this relapsed robber, had grown up a deposit, and what deposit? six hundred thousand francs. He alone held the secret of that deposit, he could have kept it all, but he gave it all up. Moreover, he had revealed his situation of his own accord, nothing compelled him to do so, and if he, Marius, knew who he was, it was through himself. There was in this confession more than the acceptance of humiliation, there was the acceptance of peril. For a condemned man a mask is not a mask, but a shelter, and he had renounced that shelter. A false name is a security, and he had thrown away that false name. He, the galley-slave, could conceal himself forever in an honest family, and he had resisted that temptation, and for what motive? through scruples of conscience. He had explained himself with the irresistible accent of truth. In short, whoever this Jean Valjean might be, his was incontestably a conscience which was being awakened. Some mysterious rehabilitation had been begun, and, according to all appearances, scruples had been master of this man for a long time past. Such attacks of justice and honesty are not peculiar to vulgar natures, and an awakening of the conscience is greatness of soul. Jean Valjean was sincere, and this sincerity, visible, palpable, irrefragable, and evident in the grief which it caused him, rendered his statements valuable, and gave authority to all that this man said. Here, for Marius, was a strange inversion of situations. What issued from M. Fauchelevent? distrust; what was disengaged from Jean Valjean? confidence. In the mysterious balance-sheet of this Jean Valjean which Marius mentally drew up, he verified the credit, he verified the debit, and tried to arrive at a balance. But all this was as in a storm, Marius striving to form a distinct idea of this man, and pursuing Jean Valjean, so to speak, to the bottom of his thoughts, lost him, and found him again in a fatal mist.

The honest restoration of the trust-money and the probity of the confession were good, and formed as it were a break in the cloud; but then the cloud became black again. How-

ever confused Marius' reminiscences might be some shadows still returned to him. What, after all, was that adventure in the Jondrette garret? why on the arrival of the police did that man, instead of complaining, escape? here Marius found the answer,—because this man was a convict who had broken his ban. Another question, Why did this man come to the barricade? for at present Marius distinctly saw again that recollection, which reappeared in his emotions like sympathetic ink before the fire. This man was at the barricade, and did not fight, what did he want there? Before this question a spectre rose, and gave the answer, Javert. Marius perfectly remembered now the mournful vision of Jean Valjean dragging the bound Javert out of the barricade, and heard again behind the angel of the little Mondétour lane the frightful pistol-shot. There was, probably, a hatred between this spy and this galley-slave, and one annoyed the other. Jean Valjean went to the barricade to revenge himself, he arrived late, and was probably aware that Javert was a prisoner there. Corsican Vendetta has penetrated certain lower stratas of society, and is the law with them: it is so simple that it does not astonish minds which have half returned to virtue, and their hearts are so constituted that a criminal, when on the path of repentance, may be scrupulous as to a robbery and not so as to a vengeance. Jean Valjean had killed Javert, or at least, that seemed evident. The last question of all admitted of no reply, and this question Marius felt like a pair of pincers. How was it that the existence of Jean Valjean had so long elbowed that of Cosette? What was this gloomy sport of Providence which had brought this man and this child in contact? are there chains for two forged in heaven, and does God take pleasure in coupling the angel with the demon? a crime and an innocence can, then, be chamber companions in the mysterious hulks of misery? In that defile of condemned men which is called human destiny, two foreheads may pass along side by side, one simple, the other formidable—one all bathed in the divine whiteness of dawn, the other eternally branded? who can have determined this inexplicable approximation? in what way, in consequence of what prodigy, could a community of life have been established between this celestial child

and this condemned old man? Who could have attached the lamb to the wolf, and, even more incomprehensible still, the wolf to the lamb? for the wolf loved the lamb, the ferocious being adored the weak being, and for nine years the angel had leant on the monster for support. The childhood and maidenhood of Cosette and her virgin growth toward life and light had been protected by this deformed devotion. Here questions exfoliated themselves, if we may employ the expression, into countless enigmas; abysses opened at the bottom of abysses, and Marius could no longer bend over Jean Valjean without feeling a dizziness: what could this man-precipice be? The old genesiactal symbols are eternal: in human society, such as it now exists until a greater light shall change it, there are even two men, one superior, the other subterranean; the one who holds to good is Abel, the one who holds to bad is Cain. What was this tender Cain? what was this bandit religiously absorbed in the adoration of a virgin, watching over her, bringing her up, guarding her, dignifying her, and, though himself impure, surrounding her with purity? What was this cloaca which had venerated this innocence so greatly as not to leave a spot upon it? what was this Valjean carrying on the education of Cosette? what was this figure of darkness, whose sole care it was to preserve from every shadow and every cloud the rising of a star?

That was Jean Valjean's secret; that was also God's secret, and Marius recoiled before this double secret. The one, to some extent, reassured him about the other, for God was as visible in this adventure as was Jean Valjean. God has His instruments, and employs whom he likes as tool, and is not responsible to him. Do we know how God sets to work? Jean Valjean had labored on Cosette, and had to some extent formed her mind, that was incontestable. Well, what then? The workman was horrible, but the work was admirable, and God produces his miracles as he thinks proper. He had constructed that charming Cosette and employed Jean Valjean on the job, and it had pleased him to choose this strange assistant. What explanation have we to ask of Him? is it the first time that manure has helped spring to produce the rose? Marius gave himself these answers, and declared to himself that they were good. On all the points which we have indicated he

had not dared to press Jean Valjean, though he did not confess to himself that he dared not. He adored Cosette, he possessed Cosette; Cosette was splendidly pure, and that was sufficient for him. What enlightenment did he require when Cosette was a light? does light need illumination? He had everything; what more could he desire? is not every thing enough? Jean Valjean's personal affairs in no way concerned him, and in bending down over the fatal shadow of this wretched man he clung to his solemn declaration, *I am nothing to Cosette; ten years ago I did not know that she existed.* Jean Valjean was a passer-by; he had said so himself. Well then, he passed, and, whoever he might be, his part was played out. Henceforth Marius would have to perform the functions of Providence toward Cosette; she had found again in either her equal, her lover, her husband, her celestial male. In flying away, Cosette, winged and transfigured, left behind her on earth her empty and hideous chrysalis, Jean Valjean. In whatever circle of ideas Marius might turn, he always came back to a certain horror of Jean Valjean; a sacred horror, perhaps, for, as we have stated, he felt a *quid divinum* in this man. But, though it was so, and whatever extenuating circumstances he might seek, he was always compelled to fall back on this: he was a convict, that is to say, a being who has not even a place on the social ladder, being beneath the lowest rung. After the last of men comes the convict, who is no longer, so to speak, in the likeness of his fellow-men. The law has deprived him of the entire amount of humanity which it can strip off a man. Marius, in penal matters, democrat though he was, was still at the inexorable system, and he entertained all the ideas of the law about those whom the law strikes. He had not yet made every progress, we are forced to say; he had not yet learned to distinguish between what is written by man and what is written by God, between the law and the right. He had examined and weighed the claim which man sets up to dispose of irrevocable, the irreparable, and the word *vindicta* was not repulsive to him. He considered it simple that certain breaches of the written law should be followed by eternal penalties, and he accepted social condemnation as a civilizing process. He was still at this point, though infallibly certain to advance at a latter date, for his nature was

good, and entirely composed of latent progress.

In this medium of ideas Jean Valjean appeared to him deformed and repelling, for he was the punished man, the convict. This word was to him like the sound of the trumpet of the last judgment, and after regarding Jean Valjean for a long time his last gesture was to turn away his head—*vade retrò*. Marius, we must recognize the fact and lay a stress on it, while questioning Jean Valjean to such an extent that Jean Valjean himself said, *You are shriving me*, had not, however, asked him two or three important questions. It was not that they had not presented themselves to his mind, but he had been afraid of them. The Jondrette garret? the barricade? Javert? Who knew where the revelations might have stopped? Jean Valjean did not seem the man to recoil, and who knows whether Marius, after urging him on, might not have wished to check him? In certain supreme conjunctures has it not happened to all of us that after asking a question we have stopped our ears, in order not to hear the answer? a man is specially guilty of such an act of cowardice when he is in love. It is not wise to drive sinister situations into a corner, especially when the indissoluble side of our own life is fatally mixed up with them. What a frightful light might issue from Jean Valjean's desperate explanations, and who knows whether that hideous brightness might not have been reflected on Cosette? Who knows whether a sort of infernal gleam might not have remained on that angel's brow? Fatality knows such complications in which innocence itself is branded with crime by the fatal law of coloring reflections, and the purest faces may retain forever the impression of a horrible vicinity. Whether rightly or wrongly, Marius was terrified, for he already knew too much, and he had rather to deafen than enlighten himself. He wildly bore off Cosette in his arms, closing his eyes upon Jean Valjean. This man belonged to the night, the living and terrible night; how could he dare to seek its foundation? It is a horrible thing to question the shadow, for who knows what it will answer? The dawn might be eternally blackened by it. In this state of mind it was a crushing perplexity for Marius to think that henceforth this man would have any contact with Cosette; and he now almost reproached

himself for not having asked these formidable questions before which he had recoiled, and from which an implacable and definitive decision might have issued. He considered himself too kind, too gentle, and, let us say it, too weak ; and the weakness had led him to make a fatal concession. He had allowed himself to be affected, and had done wrong, he ought simply and purely to have rejected Jean Valjean. Jean Valjean was an incendiary, and he ought to have freed his house from the presence of this man. He was angry with himself, he was angry with that whirlwind of emotions which had deafened, blinded, and carried him away. He was dissatisfied with himself.

What was he to do now ? the visits of Jean Valjean were most deeply repulsive to him. Of what use was it that this man should come to his house ! what did he want here ? Here he refused to investigate the matter, he refused to study ; and he was unwilling to probe his own heart. He had promised, he had allowed himself to be drawn into a promise : Jean Valjean held that promise, and he must keep his word even with a convict,—above all with a convict. Still his first duty was toward Cosette ; and a word, a repulsion, which overcame everything else, caused him a loathing. Marius confusedly revolved all these ideas in his mind, passing from one to the other, and shaken by all. Hence arose a deep trouble, which it was not easy to conceal from Cosette, but love is a talent, and Marius succeeded in doing it. However, he asked, without any apparent motive, some questions of Cosette, who was as candid as a dove in white, and suspected nothing ; he spoke to her of her childhood and her youth, and he convinced himself more and more that this convict had been to Cosette as good, paternal, and respectful as a man can be. Everything of which Marius had caught a glimpse and supposed, was real,—this sinister nettle had loved and protected this lily.

## CHAPTER CCLXII.

### THE GROUND-FLOOR ROOM.

ON the morrow, at nightfall, Jean Valjean tapped at the gateway of the Gillenormand mansion, and it was Basque who received him. Basque was in the yard at the ap-

pointed time, as if he had had his orders. It sometimes happens that people will say to a servant, "You will watch for Mr. So-and-So's arrival." Basque, without waiting for Jean Valjean to come up to him, said,—

"Monsieur le Baron has instructed me to ask you, sir, whether you wish to go up stairs or stay down here?"

"Stay down here," Jean Valjean replied.

Basque, who, however, was perfectly respectful in his manner, opened the door of the ground-floor room, and said, "I will go and inform her ladyship." The room which Jean Valjean entered was a damp, arched, basement room, employed as a cellar at times, looking out on the street, with a flooring of red tiles, and badly lighted by an iron-barred window. This room was not one of those which are harrassed by the broom and mop, and the dust was quiet there. No persecution of the spiders had been organized ; and a fine web, extensively drawn out, quite black, and adorned with dead flies, formed a wheel on one of the window panes. The room, which was small and low-ceilinged, was furnished with a pile of empty bottles collected in a corner. The wall, covered with a yellow-ochre wash, crumbled off in large patches ; at the end was a mantelpiece of paneled black wood, with a narrow shelf, and a fire was lighted in it, which indicated that Jean Valjean's reply *remain down here* had been calculated on. Two chairs were placed, one in each chimney-corner, and between the chairs was spread, in guise of carpet, an old bed-room rug, which displayed more cord than wool. The room was illumined by the flickering of the fire, and the twilight through the window. Jean Valjean, was fatigued, for several days he had not eaten or slept, and he fell into one of the armchairs. Basque returned, placed a lighted candle on the mantelpiece, and withdrew. Jean Valjean, who was sitting with hanging head, did not notice either Basque or the candle, till all at once he started up, for Cosette was behind him : he had not seen her come in, but he felt that she was doing so. He turned round and contemplated her ; she was adorably lovely. But what he gazed at with this profound glance was not the beauty, but the soul.

"Well, father," Cosette exclaimed, "I knew that you were singular, but I could never have expected this. What an idea !

Marius told me that it was your wish to see me here."

"Yes, it is."

"I expected that answer, and I warn you that I am going to have a scene with you. Let us begin with the beginning: kiss me, father."

And she offered her cheek, but Jean Valjean remained motionless.

"You do not stir, I mark the fact! it is the attitude of a culprit. But I do not care, I forgive you. Christ said, 'Offer the other cheek:' here it is."

And she offered the other cheek, but Jean Valjean did not stir; it seemed as if his feet were riveted to the floor.

"Things are growing serious," said Cosette. "What have I done to you? I am offended, and you must make it up with me; you will dine with us?"

"I have dined."

"That is not true, and I will have you scolded by M. Gillenormand. Grandfathers are made to lay down the law to fathers. Come, go with me to the drawing-room. At once."

"Impossible."

Cosette here lost a little ground; she ceased to order and began questioning.

"But why? and you choose the ugliest room in the house to see me in. It is horrible here."

"You know, Cosette—"

Jean Valjean broke off—

"You know, madame, that I am peculiar, and have my fancies."

"Madame—you know—more novelties; what does this all mean?"

Jean Valjean gave her that heartbroken smile to which he sometimes had recourse.

"You wished to be a lady, and are one."

"Not for you, father."

"Do not call me father."

"What?"

"Call me Monsieur Jean, or Jean, if you like."

"You are no longer father? I am no longer Cosette? Monsieur Jean? why, what does it mean? These are revelations. What has happened? Look me in the face, if you can. And you will not live with us! and you will not accept our bedroom! What have I done to offend you? Oh, what have I done? there must be something."

"Nothing."

"In that case then?"

"All is as usual."

"Why do you change your name?"

"You have changed yours."

He smiled the same smile again, and added,—

"Since you are Madame Pontmercy, I may fairly be Monsieur Jean."

"I do not understand anything, and all this is idiotic. I will ask my husband's leave for you to be Monsieur Jean, and I hope that he will not consent. You cause me great sorrow, and though you may have whims, you have no right to make your little Cosette grieve. That is wrong, and you have no right to be naughty, for you are so good."

As he made no reply, she seized both his hands eagerly, and with an irresistible movement raising them to her face, she pressed them against her neck under her chin, which is a profound sign of affection.

"Oh," she said, "be kind to me." And she continued,—

"This is what I call being kind; to behave yourself, come and live here, for there are birds here as in the Rue Plumet; to live with us, leave that hole in the Rue de l'Homme Armé, give us no more riddles to guess; to be like everybody else, dine with us, breakfast with us, and be my father."

He removed her hands,—

"You no longer want a father, as you have a husband."

Cosette broke out,—

"I no longer want a father! things like that have no common sense, and I really don't know what to say."

"If Toussaint were here," Jean Valjean continued, like a man seeking authorities, and who cling to every branch; "she would be the first to allow that I have always had strange ways of my own. There is nothing new in it, for I always loved my dark corner."

"But it is cold here, and we cannot see distinctly, and it is abominable to wish to be Monsieur Jean, and I shall not allow you to call me madame."

"As I was coming along just now," Jean Valjean replied, "I saw a very pretty piece of furniture at a cabinet-maker's in the Rue St. Louis. If I were a pretty woman, I should treat myself to it. It is a very nice toilette table in the present fashion, made of rosewood, I think you call it, and inlaid.

There is a rather large glass with drawers, and it is very nice."

"Hou! the ugly bear!" Cosette replied. And clinching her teeth, and parting her lips in the most graceful way possible, she flew at Jean Valjean; it was a grace copying a cat.

"I am furious," she went on, "and since yesterday you have all put me in a passion. I do not understand it at all; you do not defend me against Marius, Marius does not take my part against you, and I am all alone. I have a nice room prepared, and if I could have put the bon Dieu in it, I would have done so; but my room is left on my hands and my lodger deserts me. I order Nicolette to prepare a nice little dinner, and—they will not touch your dinner, Madame. And my father Fauchelevent wishes me to call him Monsieur Jean, and that I should receive him in a frightful old, ugly, mildewed cellar, in which the walls wear a beard, and empty bottles represent the looking-glasses, and spiders' webs the curtains. I allow that you are a singular man, it is your way, but a truce is granted to a newly-married woman; and you ought not to have begun to be singular again so soon. You are going to be very satisfied, then, in your Rue de l'Homme Armé; well, I was very wretched there. What have I done to offend you? you cause me great sorrow. Fie!"

And suddenly growing serious, she looked intently at Jean Valjean and added,—

"You are angry with me for being happy, is that it?"

Simplicity sometimes penetrates unconsciously very deep, and this question, simple for Cosette, was profound for Jean Valjean. Cosette wished to scratch, but she tore. Jean Valjean turned pale, he remained for a moment without answering, and then murmured with an indescribable accent, and speaking to himself,—

"Her happiness was the object of my life, and at present God may order my departure. Cosette, thou art happy, and my course is run."

"Ah! you said *thou* to me," Cosette exclaimed, and leaped on his neck.

Jean Valjean wildly strained her to his heart, for he felt as if he were almost taking her back again.

"Thank you, father," Cosette said to him.

The excitement was getting too painful for Jean Valjean; he gently withdrew him-

self from Cosette's arms, and took up his hat.

"Well?" said Cosette.

Jean Valjean replied,—

"I am going to leave you, madame, as you will be missed."

And on the threshold he added,—

"I said to you *thou*; tell your husband that it shall not happen again. Forgive me."

Jean Valjean left Cosette stupefied by this enigmatical leave-taking.

## CHAPTER CCLXXIII.

### OTHER BACKWARD STEPS.

THE next day Jean Valjean came at the same hour, and Cosette asked him no questions, was no longer astonished, no longer exclaimed that it was cold, no longer alluded to the drawing-room; she avoided saying either father or Monsieur Jean. She allowed herself to be called madame; there was only a diminution of her delight perceptible, and she would have been sad, had sorrow been possible. It is probable that she had held with Marius one of those conversations in which the beloved man says what he wishes, explains nothing, and satisfies the beloved woman; for the curiosity of lovers does not extend far beyond their love. The basement room had been furnished up a little; Basque had suppressed the bottles, and Nicolette the spiders. Every following day brought Jean Valjean back at the same hour; he came daily, as he had not the strength to take Marius' permission otherwise than literally. Marius arranged so as to be absent at the hour when Jean Valjean came, and the house grew accustomed to M. Fauchelevent's new mode of behaviour. Toussaint helped in it; *my master was always so*, she repeated. The grandfather issued this decree—He is an original—and everything was said. Moreover, at the age of ninety no connection was possible; everything is in juxtaposition, and a new-comer is in the way; there is no place for him, for habits are unalterably formed. M. Fauchelevent, M. Trachelevent, Father Gillenormand desired nothing better than to get rid of "that gentleman," and added, "Nothing is more common than such originals. They do all sorts of strange things without any motive. The Marquis de Cano-

ples did worse, for he bought a palace in order to live in the garret."

No one caught a glimpse of the sinister reality, and in fact who could have divined such a thing? There are marshes like this in India: the water seems extraordinary, inexplicable, rippling when there is no breeze, and agitated when it ought to be calm. People look at the surface of this ebullition which has no cause, and do not suspect the hydra dragging itself along at the bottom. Many men have in this way a secret monster, an evil which they nourish, a dragon that gnaws them, a despair that dwells in their night. Such a man resembles others, comes and goes, and no one knows that he has within him a frightful parasitic pain with a thousand teeth, which dwells in the wretch and kills him. They do not know that this man is a gulf; he is stagnant but deep. From time to time a trouble which no one understands is produced on his surface; a mysterious ripple forms, then fades away, then reappears; a bubble rises and bursts. It is a slight thing, but it is terrible, for it is the respiration of the unknown beast. Certain strange habits, such as, arriving at the hour when others go away, hiding one's self when others show themselves, wearing on all occasions what may be called the wall-colored cloak, seeking the solitary walk, preferring the deserted street, not mixing in conversation, avoiding crowds and festivities, appearing to be comfortably off and living poorly, having, rich though one is, one's key in one's pocket, and one's candle in the porter's lodge, entering by the small door, and going up the back stairs—all these insignificant singularities, ripples, air bubbles, and fugitive marks on the surface, frequently come from a formidable pit.

Several weeks passed thus: a new life gradually seized on Cosette; the relations which marriage creates, visits, the management of the household, and pleasures, that great business. The pleasures of Cosette were not costly, they consisted in only one, being with Marius. To go out with him, remain at home with him, was the great occupation of her life. It was for them an ever novel joy to go out arm in arm, in the sunshine, in the open streets, without hiding themselves, in the face of everybody, both alone. Cosette had one vexation, Toussaint could not agree with Nicolette (for the weld-

ing of the two old maids was impossible), and left. The grandfather was quite well; Marius had a few briefs now and then; Aunt Gillenormand peacefully lived with the married pair that lateral life which sufficed her, and Jean Valjean came daily. The madame and the Monsieur Jean, however, made him different to Cosette, and the care he had himself taken to detach himself from her succeeded. She was more and more gay, and less and less affectionate, and yet she loved him dearly still, and he felt it. One day she suddenly said to him, "You were my father, you are no longer my father; you were my uncle, you are no longer my uncle; you were Monsieur Fauchelevent, and are now Jean. Who are you then? I do not like all this. If I did not know you to be so good, I should be afraid of you." He still lived in the Rue de l'Homme Armé, as he could not resolve to remove from the quarter in which Cosette lived. At first he only stayed a few minutes with Cosette, and then went away, but by degrees he grew into the habit of making his visits longer. It might be said that he took advantage of the lengthening days; he arrived sooner and went away later. One day, the word father slipped over Cosette's lips, and a gleam of joy lit up Jean Valjean's old solemn face, but he chided her; "Say Jean."

"Ah, that is true," she replied, with a burst of laughter, "Monsieur Jean."

"That is right," he said, and he turned away that she might not see the tears in his eyes.

#### CHAPTER CCLXXIV.

##### THEY REMEMBER THE GARDEN IN THE RUE PLUMET.

THIS was the last occasion, and after this last flare total extinction took place. There was no more familiarity, no more good-day with a kiss, and never again that so deeply tender word "father;" he had been, at his own request and with his own complicity, expelled from all those joys in succession, and he underwent this misery, that, after losing Cosette entirely on one day, he was then obliged to lose her again bit by bit. The eye eventually grows accustomed to cellar light, and he found it enough to have an apparition of Cosette daily. His whole life was concentrated in that hour; he sat down by her side,



looked at her in silence, or else talked to her about former years, her childhood, the convent, and her little friends of those days. One afternoon—it was an early day in April, already warm, but still fresh, the moment of the sun's great gayety—the gardens that surrounded Marius' and Cosette's windows were rousing from their slumber, the hawthorn was about to burgeon, a jewelry of wall flowers was displayed on the old wall, there was on the grass a fairy carpet of daisies and buttercups, the white butterflies were springing forth, and the wind, that minstrel of the eternal wedding, was trying in the trees the first notes of that great auroral symphony which the old poets called the renewal—Marius said to Cosette, "We said that we would go and see our garden in the Rue Plumet again. Come, we must not be ungrateful." And they flew off like two swallows toward the spring. This garden in the Rue Plumet produced on them the effect of a dawn, for they already had behind them in life something that resembled the springtime of their love. The house in the Rue Plumet, being taken on lease, still belonged to Cosette; they went to this garden and house, found themselves again, and forgot themselves there. In the evening Jean Valjean went to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire at the usual hour. "My lady went out with the Baron," said Basque, "and has not returned yet." He sat down silently and waited an hour, but Cosette did not come in; he hung his head and went away. Cosette was so intoxicated by the walk in "their garden," and so pleased at having "lived a whole day in her past," that she spoke of nothing else the next day. She did not remark that she had not seen Jean Valjean.

"How did you go there?" Jean Valjean asked her.

"On foot."

"And how did you return?"

"On foot too."

For some time Jean Valjean had noticed the close life which the young couple led, and was annoyed at it. Marius' economy was strict, and that word had its absolute meaning with Jean Valjean; he hazarded a question.

"Why do you not keep a carriage? A little coupé would not cost you more than five hundred francs a month, and you are rich."

"I do not know," Cosette answered.

"It is the same with Toussaint," Jean Valjean continued; "she has left, and you have engaged no one in her place. Why not?"

"Nicolette is sufficient."

"But you must want a lady's maid?"

"Have I not Marius?"

"You ought to have a house of your own, servants of your own, a carriage, and a box at the opera. Nothing is too good for you. Then why not take advantage of the fact of your being rich? Wealth adds to happiness."

Cosette made no reply. Jean Valjean's visits did not grow shorter, on the contrary, for when it is the heart that is slipping, a man does not stop on the incline. When Jean Valjean wished to prolong his visit and make the hour be forgotten, he sung the praises of Marius, he found him handsome, noble, brave, witty, eloquent, and good. Cosette added to the praise, and Jean Valjean began again. It was an inexhaustible subject, and there were volumes in the six letters composing Marius' name. In this way Jean Valjean managed to stop for a long time, for it was so sweet to see Cosette and forget by her side. It was a dressing for his wound. It frequently happened that Basque would come and say twice,—“M. Gillenormand has sent me to remind Madame la Baronne that dinner is waiting.” On those days Jean Valjean would return home very thoughtful. Was there any truth in that comparison of the chrysalis which had occurred to Marius' mind? Was Jean Valjean really an obstinate chrysalis, constantly paying visits to his butterfly? One day he remained longer than usual, and the next noticed there was no fire in the grate. "Stay," he thought, "no fire?"—and he gave himself this explanation—"it is very simple; we are in April, and the cold weather has passed."

"Good gracious! how cold it is here!" Cosette exclaimed as she came in.

"Oh no," said Jean Valjean.

"Then it was you who told Basque not to light a fire?"

"Yes, we shall have May here directly."

"But fires keep on until June; in this cellar there ought to be one all the year round."

"I thought it was unnecessary."

"That is just like one of your ideas," Cosette remarked.

The next day there was a fire, but the two chairs were placed at the other end of the room, near the door. "What is the meaning of that?" Jean Valjean thought; he fetched the chairs and placed them in their usual place near the chimney. This rekindled fire, however, encouraged him, and made the conversation last even longer than usual. As he rose to leave Cosette remarked to him,—

"My husband said a funny thing to me yesterday."

"What was it?"

"He said to me, 'Cosette, we have thirty thousand francs a year,—twenty-seven of yours, and three that my grandfather allows me.' I replied, 'That makes thirty;' and he continued, 'Would you have the courage to live on the three thousand?' I answered, 'Yes, on nothing, provided that it be with you;' and then I asked him, 'Why did you say that to me?' He replied, 'I merely wished to know.'"

Jean Valjean had not a word to say. Cosette probably expected some explanation from him, but he listened to her in a sullen silence. He went back to the Rue de l'Homme Armé, and was so profoundly abstracted that, instead of entering his own house, he went into the next one. It was not until he had gone up nearly two flights of stairs that he noticed his mistake, he came down again. His mind was crammed with conjectures: it was evident that Marius entertained doubts as to the origin of the six hundred thousand francs, that he feared some impure source; he might even, who knew? have discovered that this money came from him, Jean Valjean; that he hesitated to touch this suspicious fortune, and was repugnant to use it as his own, preferring that Cosette and he should remain poor than be rich with dubious wealth. Moreover, Jean Valjean was beginning to feel himself shown to the door. On the following day he had a species of shock on entering the basement room; fauteuils had disappeared, and there was not even a seat of any sort.

"Dear me, no chairs," Cosette exclaimed on entering, "where are they?"

"They are no longer here," Jean Valjean replied.

"That is rather too much."

Jean Valjean stammered,—

"I told Basque to remove them."

"For what reason?"

"I shall only remain a few minutes to-day."

"Few or many, that is no reason for standing."

"I believe that Basque required the chairs for the drawing-room."

"Why?"

"You have probably company this evening."

"Not a soul."

"Jean Valjean had not another word to say, and Cosette shrugged her shoulders."

"Have the chairs removed! The other day you ordered the fire to be left off! How singular you are!"

"Good-bye," Jean Valjean murmured.

He did not say "Good-bye, Cosette," but he had not the strength to say "Good-bye, madame."

He went away, crushed, for this time he had comprehended. The next day he did not come, and Cosette did not remark this till the evening.

"Dear me," she said, "Monsieur Jean did not come to-day."

She felt a slight pang at the heart, but she scarce noticed it, as she was at once distracted by a kiss from Marius. The next day he did not come either. Cosette paid no attention to this, spent the evening, and slept at night as usual, and only thought of it when she woke; she was so happy! She very soon sent Nicolette to Monsieur Jean's to see whether he were ill, and why he did not come to see her on the previous day, and Nicolette brought back Monsieur Jean's answer. "He was not ill, but was busy, and would come soon, so soon as he could. But he was going to make a little journey, and madame would remember that he was accustomed to do so every now and then. She need not feel at all alarmed or trouble herself about him." Nicolette, on entering Monsieur Jean's room, had repeated to him her mistress' exact words,— "That madame sent to know 'why Monsieur Jean had not called on the previous day?'" "I have not called for two days," Jean Valjean said quietly, but the observation escaped Nicolette's notice, and she did not repeat it to Cosette.

## CHAPTER CCLXXV.

### ATTRACTION AND EXTINCTION.

DURING the last months of spring and the early months of summer, 1833 the scanty

passers-by in the Marais, the shopkeepers, and the idlers in the doorways, noticed an old gentleman, decently dressed in black, who every day, at nearly the same hour in the evening, left the Rue de l'Homme Armé, in the direction of the Rue Sainte Croix de la Bretonnerie, passed in front of the Blancs Manteaux, reached the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catharine, and on coming to the Rue de l'Escharpe, turned to his left and entered the Rue Saint Louis. There he walked slowly, with head stretched forward, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, with his eye incessantly fixed on a spot which always seemed his magnet, and which was nought else than the corner of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire. The nearer he came to this corner, the more brightly his eye flashed, a sort of joy illumined his eye-balls, like an eternal dawn; he had a fascinated and affectionate air, his lips made obscure movements as if speaking to some one whom he could not see; he smiled vaguely, and he advanced as slowly as he could. It seemed as if, while wishing to arrive, he was afraid of the moment when he came quite close. When he had only a few houses between himself and the street which appeared to attract him, his step became so slow that at moments he seemed not to be moving at all. The vacillation of his head and the fixedness of his eye suggested the needle seeking the pole. Whatever time he might make his arrival last, he must arrive in the end; when he reached the corner of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, he trembled, thrust his head with a species of gloomy timidity beyond the corner of the last house, and looked into this street, and there was in this glance something that resembled the bedazzlement of the impossible and the reflection of a closed paradise. Then a tear, which had been gradually collecting in the corner of his eyelashes, having grown large enough to fall, glided down his cheeks, and sometimes stopped at his mouth. The old man tasted its bitter flavor. He stood thus for some minutes as if he were of stone; then returned by the same road, at the same pace, and the further he got away the more lustreless his eye became.

By degrees this old man ceased going as far as the corner of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire; he stopped half-way in the Rue St. Louis; at times a little further off, at times a little nearer. One day he stopped at the

corner of the Rue Culture-Sainte-Catherine, and gazed at the Rue des Filles du Calvaire from a distance; then he silently shook his head from right to left, as if refusing himself something and turned back. Ere long he did not reach even the Rue St. Louis; he arrived at the Rue Pavie, shook his head and turned back; then he did not go beyond the Rue des Trois Pavillons; and then he not pass the Blancs Manteaux. He seemed like a clock which was not wound up, and whose oscillations grow shorter and shorter till they stop. Every day he left his house at the same hour, undertook the same walk, but did not finish it, and incessantly shortened it, though probably unconscious of the fact. His whole countenance expressed the sole idea, Of what good is it? His eyes were lustreless, and there was no radiance in them. The tears were also dried up; they no longer collected in the corner of his eyelashes, and this pensive eye was dry. The old man's head was still thrust forward; the chin moved at times, and the creases in his thin neck were painful to look on. At times when the weather was bad, he had an umbrella under his arm, which he never opened. The good women of the district said, "He is an innocent," and the children followed him with shouts of laughter.

## CHAPTER CCLXXVI.

PITY THE UNHAPPY, BUT BE INDULGENT TO THE HAPPY.

It is a terrible thing to be happy! How satisfied people are! how sufficient they find it! how, when possessed of the false object of life, happiness, they forgot the true one, duty! We are bound to say, however, that it would be unjust to accuse Marius. Marius, as we have explained, before his marriage asked no questions of M. Fauchelevent, and since had been afraid to ask any of Jean Valjean. He had regretted the promise which he had allowed to be drawn from him, and had repeatedly said to himself that he had done wrong in making this concession to despair. He had restricted himself to gradually turning Jean Valjean out of his house, and effacing him as far as possible in Cosette's mind. He had to some extent constantly stationed himself between Cosette and Jean Valjean, feeling certain that in this way she would not perceive it, or think of it. It was more than an efface-

ment, it was an eclipse. Marius did what he considered necessary and just; he believed that he had serious reasons, some of which we have seen, and some we have yet to see, for getting rid of Jean Valjean, without harshness, but without weakness. Chance having made him acquainted, in a trial in which he was retained, with an ex-clerk of Laffitte's bank, he had obtained, without seeking it, mysterious information, which in truth, he had not been able to examine, through respect for the secret he had promised to keep, and through regard for Jean Valjean's perilous situation. He believed, at this very moment, that he had a serious duty to perform, the restitution of the six hundred thousand francs to some one whom he was seeking as discreetly as he could. In the meanwhile, he abstained from touching that money.

As for Cosette, she was not acquainted with any of these secrets; but it would be harsh to condemn her, either. Between Marius and her was an omnipotent magnetism, which made her do distinctly and almost mechanically whatever Marius wished. She felt a wish of Marius in the matter of Monsieur Jean, and she conformed to it. Her husband had said nothing to her, but she underwent the vague but clear presence of his tacit intentions, and blindly obeyed. Her obedience in this case consisted in not remembering what Marius forgot; and she had no effort to make in doing so. Without her knowing why, her mind had so thoroughly become that of her husband, that whatever covered itself with a shadow in Marius' thoughts was obscured in hers. Let us not go too far, however; as regards Jean Valjean, this effacement and this forgetfulness were only superficial; and she was thoughtless rather than forgetful. In her heart she truly loved the man whom she had so long called father, but she loved her husband more, and this had slightly falsified the balance of this heart, which weighed down on one side only. It happened at times that Cosette would speak of Jean Valjean and express her surprise, and then Marius would calm her. "He is away, I believe; did he not say that he was going on a journey?"—"That is true," Cosette thought, "he used to disappear like that, but not for so long a time." Twice or thrice she sent Nicolette to inquire in the Rue de l'Homme Armé wheth-

er Monsieur Jean had returned from his tour, and Jean Valjean sent answer in the negative. Cosette asked no more, as she had on earth but one want, Marius. Let us also say that Marius and Cosette had been absent too. They went to Vernon, and Marius took Cosette to his father's tomb. Marius had gradually abstracted Cosette from Jean Valjean, and Cosette had allowed it. However, what is called much too harshly in certain cases the ingratitude of children is not always so reprehensible a thing as may be believed. It is the ingratitude of nature, for nature, as we have said elsewhere, "looks before her," and divides living beings into arrivals and departures. The departures are turned to the darkness, and the arrivals toward light. Hence a divergence, which on the part of the old is fatal, on the part of the young is involuntary, and this divergence, at first insensible, increases slowly, like every separation of branches, and the twigs separate without detaching themselves from the parent stem. It is not their fault, for youth goes where there is joy, to festivals, to bright light, and to love, while old age proceeds toward the end. They do not lose each other out of sight, but there is no longer a connecting link: the young people feel the chill of life, and the old that of the tomb. Let us not accuse these poor children.

## CHAPTER CCLXXVII.

A PEN IS TOO HEAVY FOR THE MAN WHO  
SAVED FAUCHELEVENT.

ONE day Jean Valjean went down his staircase, took three steps in the street, sat down upon a post, the same one on which Gavroche had found him sitting in thought on the night of June 5th; he stayed there a few minutes, and then went up again. This was the last oscillation of the pendulum; the next day he did not leave his room; the next to that he did not leave his bed. The porter's wife, who prepared his poor meals for him, some cabbage or a few potatoes and a little bacon, looked at the brown earthenware plate and exclaimed,—

"Why, poor dear man, you ate nothing yesterday."

"Yes I did," Jean Valjean answered.

"The plate is quite full."

"Look at the water jug: it is empty."

"That proves you have drunk, but does not prove that you have eaten."

"Well," said Jean Valjean, "suppose that I only felt hungry for water?"

"That is called thirst, and if a man does not eat at the same time it is called fever."

"I will eat to-morrow."

"Or on Trinity Sunday. Why not to-day? whoever thought of saying, I will eat to-morrow? To leave my plate without touching it my rashers were so good."

Jean Valjean took the old woman's hand.

"I promise you to eat them," he said, in his gentle voice.

"I am not pleased with you," the woman replied.

Jean Valjean never saw any other human creature but this good woman: there are in Paris streets through which people never pass, and houses which people never enter, and he lived in one of those streets and one of those houses. During the time when he still went out he had bought at a brazier's for a few sous a small copper crucifix, which he suspended from a nail opposite his bed; that gibbet is ever good to look on. A week passed thus, and Jean Valjean still remained in bed. The porter's wife said to her husband, "The old gentleman up stairs does not get up, he does not eat, and he will not last long. He has a sorrow, and no one will get it out of my head but that his daughter has made a bad match."

The porter replied, with the accent of martial sovereignty,—

"If he is rich, he can have a doctor; if he is not rich, he can't. If he has no doctor, he will die."

"And if he has one?"

"He will die," said the porter.

The porter's wife began digging up with an old knife the grass between what she called her pavement, and while doing so grumbled,—

"It's a pity. An old man who is so clean. He is as white as a pullet."

She saw a doctor belonging to the quarter passing along the bottom of the street, and took upon herself to ask him to go up.

"It's on the second floor," she said; "you will only have to go in, for, as the old gentleman no longer leaves his bed, the key is always in the door."

The physician saw Jean Valjean and

spoke to him: when he came down again the porter's wife was waiting for him.

"Well, doctor?"

"He is very ill."

"What is the matter with him?"

"Everything and nothing. He is a man who, from all appearances, has lost a beloved person. People die of that."

"What did he say to you?"

"He told me that he was quite well."

"Will you call again, doctor?"

"Yes, the physician replied, "but some one besides me ought to come too."

One evening Jean Valjean had a difficulty in rising on his elbow; he took hold of his wrist and could not find his pulse; his breathing was short, and stopped every now and then, and he perceived that he was weaker than he had ever yet been. Then, doubtless under the pressure of some supreme pre-occupation, he made an effort, sat up, and dressed himself. He put on his old workman's clothes; for, as he no longer went out, he had returned to them and preferred them. He was compelled to pause several times while dressing himself; and the perspiration poured off his forehead, merely through the effort of putting on his jacket. Ever since he had been alone he had placed his bed in the anteroom, so as to occupy as little as possible of the deserted apartments. He opened the valise, and took out Cosette's clothing, which he spread on his bed. The bishop's candlesticks were at their place on the mantel-piece; he took two wax candles out of a drawer and put them up, and then, though it was broad summer daylight, he lit them. We sometimes see candles lighted thus in open day in rooms where dead men are lying. Each step he took in going from one article of furniture to another exhausted him, and he was obliged to sit down. It was not ordinary fatigue, which expends the strength in order to renew it; it was the remnant of possible motion; it was exhausted life falling drop by drop in crushing efforts which will not be made again.

One of the chairs on which he sank was placed near the mirror, so fatal for him, so providential for Marius, in which he had read Cosette's reversed writing on the blotting-book. He saw himself in this mirror, and could not recognize himself. He was eighty years of age: before Marius' marriage he had looked scarce fifty, but the last year

had reckoned as thirty. What he had on his forehead was no longer the wrinkle of age, but the mysterious mark of death, and the laceration of the pitiless nail could be traced on it. His cheeks were flaccid, the skin of his face had that color which leads to the belief that there is already earth upon it; the two corners of his mouth drooped as in that mask which the ancients sculptured on the tomb, he looked at space reproachfully, and he resembled one of those tragic beings who have cause to complain of some one. He had reached that stage, the last phase of dejection, in which grief no longer flows; it is, so to speak, coagulated, and there is on the soul something like a clot of despair. Night had set in, and he with difficulty dragged a table and the old easy chair to the chimney, and laid on the table pen, ink, and paper. This done, he fainted away, and when he regained his senses he was thirsty; as he could not lift the water-jar, he bent down with an effort and drank a mouthful. Then he turned to the bed, and, still seated, for he was unable to stand, he gazed at the little black dress and all those dear objects, Such contemplations last hours which appear minutes. All at once he shuddered, and felt that the cold had struck him. He leant his elbows on the table which the bishop's candlesticks illuminated, and took up the pen. As neither the pen nor the ink had been used for a long time, the nibs of the pen were bent, the ink was dried up, and he was therefore obliged to put a few drops of water into the ink, which he could not do without stopping and sitting down twice or thrice, and was forced to write with the back of the pen. He wiped his forehead from time to time, and his hand trembled as he wrote the few following lines.

"Cosette, I bless you. I am about to explain to you. Your husband did right in making me understand that I ought to go away; still, he was slightly in error as to what he believed, but he acted rightly. He is a worthy man, and love him dearly when I am gone from you. Monsieur Pontmercy, always love my beloved child. Cosette, this paper will be found, this is what I wish to say to you; you shall see the figures if I have the strength to remember them, but listen to me, the money is really yours. This is the whole affair: white jet comes from Norway, black jet comes from England, and black beads come from Germany. Jet is lighter, more

valuable, and dearer, but imitations can be made in France as well as in Germany. You must have a small anvil two inches square, and a spirit lamp to soften the wax. The wax used to be made with resin and smoke-black, and costs four francs the pound, but I hit on the idea of making it of shellac and turpentine. It only costs thirty sous, and is much better. The rings are made of violet glass fastened by means of the wax on a small black iron wire. The glass must be violet for iron ornaments, and black for gilt ornaments. Spain buys large quantities, it is the country of jet—"

Here he stopped, the pen slipped from his fingers, he burst into one of those despairing sobs which rose at times from the depths of his being; the poor man took his head between his hands and thought.

"Oh!" he exclaimed internally (lamentable cries heard by God alone), "it is all over. I shall never see her again; it is a smile which flashed across me, and I am going to enter night without even seeing her; oh! for one moment, for one instant to hear her voice, to touch her, to look at her, her, the angel, and then die; death is nothing, but the frightful thing is to die without seeing her. She would smile on me, say a word to me, and would that do any one harm? No, it is all over forever. I am all alone, my God! my God! I shall see her no more."

At this moment there was a knock at his door.

## CHAPTER CCLXXVIII.

### A BOTTLE OF INK WHICH ONLY WHITENS.

THAT same day, or to speak more correctly, that same evening, as Marius was leaving the dinner-table to withdraw to his study, as he had a brief to get up, Basque handed him a letter, saying, "The person who wrote the letter is in the anteroom." Cosette had seized her grandfather's arm, and was taking a turn round the garden. A letter may have an ugly appearance, like a man, and the mere sight of coarse paper and clumsy folding is displeasing. The letter which Basque brought was of that description. Marius took it, and it smelt of tobacco. Nothing arouses a recollection so much as a smell, and Marius recognized the tobacco. He looked at the address, *To Monsieur le Baron Pontmercy, At his*

house. The recognized tobacco made him recognize the handwriting. It might be said that astonishment has its flashes of lightning and Marius was, as it were, illumined by one of these flashes. The odor, that mysterious aid to memory, had recalled to him a world; it was really the paper, the mode of folding, the pale ink, it was really the well-known handwriting, and, above all, it was the tobacco. The Jondrette garret rose again before him. Hence—strange blow of accident!—one of the two trails which he had so long sought, the one for which he had latterly made so many efforts and believed lost forever, came to offer itself voluntarily to him. He eagerly opened the letter and read:—

“MONSIEUR LE BARON:

“If the Supreme Being had endowed me with talents, I might have been Baron Thénard, member of the Institute (academy of sciences), but I am not so, I merely bear the same name with him, and shall be happy if this reminiscence recommends me to the excellence of your kindness. The benefits with which you may honor me will be reciprocal, for I am in possession of a secret concerning an individual. This individual concerns you. I hold the secret at your disposal, as I desire the honor of being huseful to you. I will give you the simple means for expeling from your honorable family this individual who has no right in it, Madame la Barronne being of high birth. The sanctuary of virtue could no longer coabit with crime without abdicating.

“I await in the anteroom the order of Monsieur le Baron. Respectfully.”

The letter was signed “THENARD.” This signature was not false but only slightly abridged. However, the bombast and the orthography completed the revelation, the certificate of origin was perfect, and no doubt was possible. Marius’ emotion was profound; and after the moment of surprise he had a moment of happiness. Let him now find the other man he sought, the man who had saved him, Marius, and he would have nothing more to desire. He opened a drawer in his bureau, took out several bank-notes, which he put in his pocket, closed the bureau again, and rang. Basque opened the door partly,

“Show the man in,” said Marius.

Basque announced,—

“M. Thénard ”

A man came in, and it was a fresh surprise for Marius, as the man he now saw was a perfect stranger to him. This man, who was old, by the way, had a large nose, his chin in his cravat, green spectacles, with a double shade of green silk over his eyes, and his hair smoothed down and flattened on his forehead over his eyebrows, like the wig of English coachman of high life. His hair was gray. He was dressed in black from head to foot, a very seedy but clean black, and a bunch of seals, emerging from his fob, led to the supposition that he had a watch. He held an old hat in his hand, and walked bent, and the curve of his back augmented the depth of his bow. The thing which struck most at the first glance was that this person’s coat, too large, though carefully buttoned, had not been made for him. A short digression is necessary here.

There was at that period in Paris, in an old house situated in the Rue Beautreillis near the arsenal, an old Jew whose trade it was to covert a rogue into an honest man, though not for too long a period, as it might have been troublesome to the rogue. The change was effected at sight, for one day or two at the rate of thirty sous a day, by means of a costume resembling closely as possible every-day honesty. This letter-out of suits was called the *Changer*. Parisian thieves had given him that name, and knew him by no other. He had a very complete wardrobe, and the clothes in which he invested people were almost possible. He had specialties and categories: from each nail of his store hung a social condition, worn and threadbare; here the magistrate’s coat, there the curé’s coat, and the banker’s coat; in one corner the coat of an officer on half pay, elsewhere the coat of a man of letters, and further on a statesman’s coat. This creature was the costumier of the immense drama which roguery plays in Paris, and his den was the side-scene from which robbery made its entrance, or swindling its exit. A ragged rogue arrived at this wardrobe, deposited thirty sous, and selected, according to the part which he wished to play on that day, the clothes which suited him; and, on going down stairs again, the rogue was somebody. The next day the clothes were faithfully brought back, and the changer who entirely trusted the thieves, was never robbed. The garments had one inconvenience,—they did not fit; not being made

for the man who wore them, they were tight on one, loose on another, and fitted nobody. Any swindler who exceeded the average mean in height or shortness, was uncomfortable in the changer's suits. A man must be neither too stout nor too thin, for the changer had only provided for ordinary mortals, and had taken the measure of the species in the person of the first thief who turned up, and is neither stout nor thin, nor tall nor short. Hence arose at times difficult adaptations, which the changer's customers got over as best they could. All the worse for the exceptions! The statesmen's garments for instance, black from head to foot, would have been too loose for Pitt and too tight for Castelfidardo. The statesmen's suits was thus described in the changer's catalogue, from which we copied it: "A black cloth coat, black moleskin trousers, a silk waistcoat, boots, and white shirt." There was on the margin *Ex-Ambassador*, and a note which we also transcribe: "In a separate box a carefully-dressed peruke, green spectacles, bunch of seals, and two little quills an inch in length, wrapped in cotton." All this belonged to the statesmen or ex-ambassador. The whole of costume was if we may say so, extenuated. The seams were white, and a small button-hole gaped at one of the elbows; moreover a button was missing off the front, but that is only a detail, for as the hand of the statesman must always be thrust into the coat, and upon the heart, it had the duty of hiding the absence of the button.

Had Marius been familiar with the occult institutions of Paris, he would at once have recognized in the back of the visitor whom Basque had just shown in, the coat of the statesman borrowed from the Unhook-me, that of the changer. Marius' disappointment, on seeing a different man from the one whom he expected to enter, turned into disgust with the new-comer. He examined him from head to foot, while the personage was giving him an exaggerated bow, and asked him curtly, "What do you want?"

The man replied with an amiable *ricтус*, of which the caressing smile of a crocodile would supply some idea:—

"It appears to me impossible that I have not already had the honor of seeing Monsieur le Baron in society. I have a peculiar impression of having met you, my lord, a few years back, at the Princess Bagration's and in the

salons of his Excellency Vicomt Dambray, Peer of France.

It is always good tactics in swindling to pretend to recognize a person whom the swindler does not know. Marius paid attention to the man's words, he watched the action and movement, but his disappointment increased; it was a nasal pronunciation, absolutely different from the sharp dry voice he expected. He was utterly routed.

"I do not know," he said, "either Madame Bagration or Monsieur Dambray. I never set foot in the house of either of them."

The answer was rough, but the personage continued with undiminished affability,—

"Then, it must have been at Chateaubriand's, my lord, that I saw you! I know Chateaubriand intimately, and he is a most affable man. He says to me sometimes, Thénard, my good friend, will you not drink a glass with me?"

Marius' brow became sterner and sterner. "I never had the honor of being introduced to M. de Chateaubriand. Come to the point, what do you want with me?"

The man bowed lower still before this harsh voice.

"Monsieur le Baron, deign to listen to me. There is in America, in a country near Panama, a village called La Joya, and this village is composed of a single house. A large square house three stories high, built of bricks dried in the sun, each side of the square being five hundred feet long, and each story retiring from the one under it for a distance of twelve feet, so as to leave in front of it a terrace which runs all round the house. In the centre is an inner court, in which provisions and ammunition are stored; there are no windows, only loop-holes, no door, only ladders—ladders to mount from the ground to the first terrace, and from the first to the second, and from the second to the third, ladders to descend into the inner court; no doors to the rooms, only traps; no staircases to the apartments, only ladders. At night the trap-doors are closed, the ladders are drawn up, and blunderbusses and carbines are placed in the loop-holes; there is no way of entering; it is a house by day, a citadel by night. Eight hundred inhabitants, such is this village. Why such precautions? Because the country is dangerous, and full of anthropophagists. Then, why do people go



there? Because it is a marvellous country, and gold is found there."

"What you are driving at?" Marius, who had passed from disappointment to impatience, interrupted.

"To this, M. le Baron. I am an ex-worn-out diplomatist. I am sick of our old civilization, and wish try the savages."

"What next?"

"Monsieur le Baron, egotism is the law of the world. The proletarian peasant-wench who works by the day turns round when the diligence passes, but the peasant woman who is laboring on her own field does not turn. The poor man's dog barks after the rich; the rich man's dog barks after the poor; each for himself, and self-interest is the object of mankind. Gold is the magnet."

"What next? conclude."

"I should like to go and settle at La Jofya. There are three of us. I have my wife and my daughter, a very lovely girl. The voyage is long and expensive, and I am short of funds."

"How does that concern me?" Marius asked.

The stranger thrust his neck out of his cravat, with a gesture peculiar to the vulture, and said, with a more affable smile than before,—

"Monsieur le Baron cannot have read my letter?"

That was almost true, and the fact is that the contents of the epistle had escaped Marius; he had seen the writing rather than read the letter, and he scarce remembered it. A new hint had just been given him, and he noticed the detail, "My wife and daughter." He fixed a penetrating glance on the stranger, a magistrate could not have done it better, but he confined himself to saying,—

"Be more precise."

The stranger thrust his hands in his trousers' pockets, raised his head without straightening his backbone, but on his side scrutinizing Marius through his green spectacles.

"Very good, M. le Baron. I will be precise. I have a secret to sell you."

"Does it concern me?"

"Slightly."

"What is it?"

Marius more and more examined the man while listening.

"I will begin gratis," the stranger said; "you will see that it is interesting."

"Speak."

"Monsieur le Baron, you have in your house a robber and assassin."

Marius gave a start.

"In my house? no," he said.

The stranger imperturbably brushed his hat with his arm, and went on.

"An assassin and robber. Remark, M. le Baron, that I am not speaking here of old-forgotten facts, which might be effaced by prescription before the law—by repentance before God. I am speaking of recent facts, of present facts, of facts still unknown to justice. I continue. This man has crept into your confidence, and almost into your family, under a false name. I am going to tell you his real name, and tell you it for nothing."

"I am listening."

"His name is Jean Valjean."

"I know it."

"I will tell, equally for nothing, who he is."

"Speak."

"He is an ex-convict."

"I know it."

"You have known it since I had the honor of telling you."

"No, I was aware of it before."

Marius' cold tone, this double reply, *I know it*, and his refractory disinclination to speak, aroused some latent anger in the stranger, and he gave Marius a furious side-glance, which was immediately extinguished. Rapid though it was, the glance was one of those which are recognized if they have once been seen, and it did not escape Marius. Certain flashes can only come from certain souls; the eyeball, that cellar-door of the soul, is lit up by them, and green spectacles conceal nothing; you might as well put up a glass window to hell. The stranger continued smiling,—

"I will not venture to contradict M. le Baron, but in any case you will see that I am well informed. Now, what I have to tell you is known to myself alone, and it affects the fortune of Madame la Baronne. It is an extraordinary secret, and is for sale. I offer it you first. Cheap, twenty thousand francs."

"I know that secret as I know the other," said Marius.

The personage felt the necessity of lowering his price a little.

"Monsieur le Baron, let us say ten thousand francs, and I will speak."

"I repeat to you that you have nothing to tell me. I know what you want to say to me."

There was a fresh flash in the man's eye as he continued,—

"Still I must dine to day. It is an extraordinary secret, I tell you. Monsieur, I am going to speak. I am speaking. Give me twenty francs."

Marius looked at him fixedly.

"I know your extraordinary secret, just as I know Jean Valjean's name, and as I know yours."

"My name?"

"Yes."

"That is not difficult, M. le Baron, for I had the honor of writing it and mentioning it to you. Thénard—"

"—dier?"

"What?"

"Thénardier."

"What does this mean?"

In danger the porcupine bristles, the beetle feigns death, the old guard forms a square. This man began laughing. Then he flipped a grain of dust off his coat sleeve. Marius continued,—

"You are also the workman Jondrette, the actor Fabantou, the poet Genflot, the Spanish Don Alvares, and Madame Balizard."

"Madame who?"

"And you once kept a pothouse at Montfermeil."

"A pot-house! never."

"And I tell you that you are Thénardier."

"I deny it."

"And that you are a scoundrel. Take that."

And Marius, taking a bank-note from his pocket, threw it in his face.

"Five hundred francs! Monsieur le Baron!"

And the man, overwhelmed and bowing, clutched the note and examined it.

"Five hundred francs," he continued, quiet dazzled.

And he stammered half aloud, "No counterfeit."

Then suddenly exclaimed,—

"Well, be it so; let us be at our ease."

And with monkey-like dexterity, throwing back his hair, tearing of his spectacles, and removing the two quills to which we alluded to just now, and which we have seen before in another part of this book, he took off his

face as you or I take off our hat. His eye grew bright, the forehead hideously wrinkled at top became smooth, the nose sharp as a beak, and the ferocious and sagacious profile of the predacious man reappeared.

"Monsieur le Baron is infallible," he said in a sharp voice from which the nasal twang had entirely disappeared; "I am Thénardier."

And he drew up his curved back.

Thénardier, for it was really he, was strangely surprised, and would have been troubled could he have been so. He had come to bring astonishment, and it was himself who underwent it. This humiliation was paid for with five hundred francs, and he accepted it; but he was not the less stunned. He saw for the first time this Baron Pontmercy, and in spite of his disguise this Baron Pontmercy recognized him, and recognized him thoroughly; and not alone was this Baron acquainted with Thénardier, but he also seemed acquainted with Jean Valjean. Who was this almost beardless young man, so cold and so generous; who knew people's names, knew all their names, and opened his purse to them; who bullied rogues like a judge, and paid them like a dupe? Thénardier, it will be remembered, though he had been Marius' neighbor, had never seen him, which is frequently the case in Paris; he had formerly vaguely heard his daughter speak of a very poor young man of the name of Marius, who lived in the house, and he had written him, without knowing him, the letter we formerly read. No approximation between this Marius and M. le Baron Pontmercy was possible in his mind.

However, he had managed through his daughter Azelma, whom he put on the track of the married couple on February 16th, and by his own researches, to learn a good many things, and in his dark den had succeeded in seizing more than one mysterious thread. He had by sheer industry discovered, or at least by the inductive process had divined, who the man was whom he had met on a certain day in the great sewer. From the man he had easily arrived at the name, and he knew that Madame le Baronne Pontmercy was Cosette. But on that point he intended to be discreet: who Cosette was he did not know exactly himself. He certainly got a glimpse of some bastardism, and Fantine's story had always appeared to him doubtful. But what

was the good of speaking? to have his silence paid? He had, or fancied he had, something better to sell than that, and according to all expectation, to go and make Baron Pontmercy without further proof the revelation, *Your wife is only a bastard*, would only have succeeded in attracting the husband's boot to the broadest part of his person.

In Thénardier's thoughts the conversation with Marius had not yet begun; he had been obliged to fall back, modify his strategy, leave a position, and make a change of front; but nothing essential was as yet compromised, and he had five hundred francs in his pocket. Moreover, he had something decisive to tell, and he felt himself strong even against this Baron Pontmercy, who was so well informed and so well armed. For men of Thénardier's nature every dialogue is a combat, and what was his situation in the one which was about to begin? He did not know to whom he was speaking, but he knew of what he was speaking. He rapidly made this mental review of his forces, and after saying, *I am Thénardier*, waited. Marius was in deep thought; he at length held Thénardier, and the man whom he had so eagerly desired to find again was before him. He would be able at last to honor Colonel Pontmercy's recommendation. It humiliated him that this hero owed anything to this bandit, and that the bill of exchange drawn by his father from the tomb upon him, Marius, had remained up to this day protested. It seemed to him, too, in the complex state of his mind as regarded Thénardier, that he was bound to avenge the colonel for the misfortune of having been saved by such a villain. But, however this might be, he was satisfied; he was at length going to free the colonel's shadow from this unworthy creditor, and felt as if he was releasing his father's memory from a debtor's prison. By the side of this duty he had another, clearing up if possible the source of Cosette's fortune. The opportunity appeared to present itself, for Thénardier probably knew something, and it might be useful to see to the bottom of this man; so he began with that. Thénardier put away the "no counterfeit" carefully in his pocket, and looked at Marius with almost tender gentleness. Marius was the first to break the silence.

"Thénardier, I have told you your name, and now do you wish me to tell you the secret

which you have come to impart to me? I have my information also, and you shall see that I know more than you do. Jean Valjean, as you said, is an assassin and a robber. A robber, because he plundered a rich manufacturer, M. Madeleine, whose ruin he caused: an assassin, because he murdered Inspector Javert.

"I do not understand you, M. le Baron," said Thénardier.

"I will make you understand; listen. There was in a bailiwick of the Pas de Calais, about the year 1822, a man who had been in some trouble with the authorities, and who had rehabilitated and restored himself under the name of Monsieur Madeleine. This man had become, in the fullest extent of the term, a just man, and he made the fortune of an entire town by a trade, the manufacture of black beads. As for his private fortune, he had made that too, but secondarily, and to some extent as occasion offered. He was the foster-father of the poor, he founded hospitals, opened schools, visited the sick, dowered girls, supported widows, adopted orphans, and was, as it were, guardian of the town. He had refused the cross and was appointed mayor. A liberated convict knew the secret of a penalty formerly incurred by this man; he denounced and had him arrested, and took advantage of the arrest to come to Paris and draw out of Laffitte's, I have the facts from the cashier himself, by means of a false signature, a sum of half a million and more, which belonged to M. Madeleine. The convict who robbed M. Madeleine was Jean Valjean; as for the other fact, you can tell me no more than I know either. Jean Valjean killed Inspector Javert with a pistol-shot, and I, who am speaking to you, was present."

Thénardier gave Marius the sovereign glance of a beaten man who sets his hand again on the victory, and had regained in all the ground he had lost. But the smile at once returned, for the inferior, when in presence of his superior, must keep his triumph to himself, and Thénardier confined himself to saying to Marius,—

"Monsieur le Baron, we are on the wrong track."

And he underlined this sentence by giving his bunch of seals an expressive twirl.

"What!" Marius replied, "do you dispute it? They are facts."

"They are chimeras. The confidence with which Monsieur le Baron honors me makes it my duty to tell him so. Before all, truth and justice, and I do not like to see people accused wrongfully. Monsieur le Baron, Jean Valjean did not rob M. Madeleine, and Jean Valjean did not kill Javert."

"That is rather strong. Why not?"

"For two reasons."

"What are they? speak."

"The first is this: he did not rob M. Madeleine, because Jean Valjean himself is M. Madeleine."

"What nonsense are you talking?"

"And this is the second: he did not assassinate Javert because the man who killed Javert was Javert."

"What do you mean?"

"That Javert committed suicide."

"Prove it, prove it," cried Marius wildly.

Thénardier repeated slowly, scanning his sentence after the fashion of an ancient Alexandrian,—

"Police-Agent-Javert-was-found-drowned-under-a-boat-at-Pont-au-Change."

"But prove it, then."

Thénardier drew from his side-pocket a large gray paper parcel, which seemed to contain folded papers of various sizes,—

"I have my proofs," he said calmly, and he added,—

"Monsieur le Baron, I wished to know Jean Valjean thoroughly on your behalf. I say that Jean Valjean and Madeleine are the same, and I say that Javert had no other assassin but Javert, and when I say this, I have the proofs, not MS. proofs, for writing is suspicious and complaisant, but printed proofs."

While speaking, Thénardier extracted from the parcel two newspapers, yellow, faded, and tremendously saturated with tobacco.

One of these two papers, broken all in the folds, and falling in square rags, seemed much older than the other.

"Two facts, two proofs," said Thénardier, as he handed Marius the two open newspapers.

These two papers the reader knows; one, the older, a number of the *Drapeau Blanc*, for January 25th, 1823, of which the exact text was given at page 244, established the identity of M. Madeleine and Jean Valjean. The other, a *Moniteur*, of June 15th, 1832, announced the suicide of Javert, adding that it was found from a verbal report

made by Javert to the préfet, that he had been made prisoner at the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and owed his life to the magnanimity of an insurgent, who, holding him under his pistol, instead of blowing out his brains, fired in the air. Marius read; there was evidence, a certain date, irrefragable proof, for these two papers had not been printed expressly to support Thénardier's statement, and the note published in the *Moniteur* was officially communicated by the prefecture of police. Marius could no longer doubt, the cashier's information was false, and he was himself mistaken. Jean Valjean, suddenly growing taller, issued from the cloud, and Marius could not restrain a cry of joy.

"What, then, this poor fellow is an admirable man! all this fortune is really his! He is Madeleine, the providence of an entire town! he is Jean Valjean, the savior of Javert! he is a hero! he is a saint!"

"He is not a saint, and he is not a hero," said Thénardier, "he is an assassin and a robber."

And he added with the accent of a man beginning to feel himself possessed of some authority, "Let us calm ourselves." Robber, assassin, these words which Marius believed had disappeared, and which had returned, fell upon him like an icy douche.

"Still," he said—

"Still," said Thénardier, "Jean Valjean did not rob M. Madeleine, but he is a robber; he did not assassinate Javert, but he is an assassin."

"Are you alluding," Marius continued, to the wretched theft committed forty years back, and expiated, as is proved from those very papers, by a whole life of repentance, self-denial, and virtue?"

"I say assassination and robbery, M. la Baron, and I repeat I am alluding to recent facts. What I have to reveal to you is perfectly unknown and unpublished, and you may perhaps find it the source of the fortune cleverly offered by Jean Valjean to Madame la Barrone. I say skilfully, for it would not be a stupid act, by a donation of that nature, to step into an honorable house, whose comforts he would share, and at the same time hide the crime, enjoy his robbery, bury his name, and create a family."

"I could not interrupt you here," Marius observed, "but go on."

"Monsieur la Baron, I will tell you all, leaving the reward to your generosity, for the secret is worth its weight in gold. You will say to me, 'Why not apply to Jean Valjean?' For a very simple reason. I know that he has given up all his property in your favor, and I consider the combination ingenious; but he has not a halfpenny left; he would show me his empty hands, and as I want money for my voyage to la La Joya, I prefer you, who have everything, to him, who has nothing. As I am rather fatigued, permit me to take a chair."

Marius sat down, and made him a sign to do the same. Thénardier installed himself in any easy chair, took up the newspapers, put them back in the parcel, and muttered as he dug his nail into the *Drapeau Blanc*,—"It cost me a deal of trouble to procure this." This done, he crossed his legs, threw himself in the chair in the attitude of men who are certain of what they are stating, and then began his narrative gravely, and laying a stress on his words:—

"Monsieur la Baron, on June 6th, 1832, about a year ago, and on the day of the riots, a man was in the great sewer of Paris, at the point where the sewer falls into the Seine between the Pont des Invalides and the Pont de Jena."

Marius hurriedly drew his chair closer to Thénardier's. Thénardier noticed this movement, and continued with the slowness of an orator who holds his hearer, and feels his adversary quivering under his words:—

"This man, forced to hide himself, for reasons, however, unconnected with politics, had selected the sewer as his domicile, and had the key of it. It was, I repeat, June 6th, and about eight in the evening the man heard a noise in the sewer; feeling greatly surprised, he concealed himself and watched. It was a sound of footsteps, some one was walking in the darkness, and coming in his direction; strange to say, that there was another man beside himself in the sewer. As the outlet of the sewer was no great distance off, a little light which passed through enabled him to see the new comer, and that he was carrying something on his back. He walked in a stooping posture; he was an ex-convict, and what he had on his shoulders was a corpse. A flagrant case of assassination, were there ever one; as for the robbery, that is a matter of course, for no one kills a man gratis.

This convict was going to throw the body into the river, and a fact worth notice is, that before reaching the outlet the convict, who had come a long way through the sewer, was obliged to pass a frightful hole, in which it seems as if he might have left the corpse; but the sewer-men who came to effect the repairs next day would have found the murdered man there, and that did not suit the assassin. Hence he preferred carrying the corpse across the slough, and his efforts must have been frightful; it was impossible to risk one's life more perfectly, and I do not understand how he got out of it alive."

Marius' chair came nearer, and Thénardier took advantage of it to draw a long breath; then he continued:

"Monsieur le Baron, a sewer is not the Champ de Mars; everything is wanting there, even space, and when two men are in it together they must meet. This happened, and the domiciled man and the passer-by were compelled to bid each other good evening, to their mutual regret. The passer-by said to the domiciled man, '*You see what I have on my back. I must go out, you have the key, so give it to me.*' This convict was a man of terrible strength, and there was no chance of refusing him; still the man who held the key parleyed, solely to gain time. He examined the dead man, but could see nothing, except that he was young, well dressed, had a rich look, and was quite disfigured with blood. While talking, he managed to tear off, without the murderer perceiving it, a piece of skirt of the victim's coat, as a convincing proof, you understand, a means of getting on the track of the affair, and bringing the crime home to the criminal. He placed the piece of cloth in his pocket; after which he opened the grating, and allowed the man with the load on his back to go out, locked the grating again, and ran away, not feeling at all desirous of being mixed up any further in the adventure, or to be present when the assassin threw the corpse into the river. You now understand; the man who carried the corpse was Jean Valjean, the one who had the key is speaking to you at this moment and the piece of coat-skirt ——."

Thénardier completed the sentence by drawing from his pocket and holding level with his eyes a ragged piece of black cloth, all covered with dark spots. Marius had risen pale, scarce breathing, with his eye fixed on

the black patch, and, without uttering a syllable, or without taking his eyes off the rag, he fell back, and, with his right hand extended behind him, felt for the key of a wall cupboard near the mantelpiece. He found this key, opened the cupboard, and thrust his hand without looking or once taking his eyes off the rag which Thénardier displayed. In the meanwhile Thénardier continued,—

“Monsieur le Baron, I have the strongest grounds for believing that the assassinated young man was a wealthy foreigner, drawn by Jean Valjean into a trap, and carrying an enormous sum about him.”

“I was the young man, and here is the coat!” cried Marius as he threw on the floor and old blood-stained surtout. Then, taking the patch from Thénardier’s hands, he bent over the coat and put it in its place in the skirt; the rent fitted exactly, and the fragment completed the coat. Thénardier was petrified; and thought, “I’m sold.” Marius drew himself up, shuddering, desperate, and radiant; he felt in his pocket, and walking furiously towards Thénardier, thrusting almost into his face his hand full of five hundred and thousand franc notes,—

“You are an infamous wretch! you are a liar, a calumniator, and a villain! You came to accuse that man, and you have justified him; you came to ruin him, and have only succeeded in glorifying him. And it is you who are the robber! it is you who are an assassin! I saw you, Thénardier-Jondrette, at that den on the Boulevard de l’Hôpital. I know enough about you to send you to the galleys, and even further if I liked. There are a thousand francs, ruffian that you are!”

And he threw a thousand franc note at Thénardier.

“Ah, Jondrette—Thénardier, vile scoundrel, let this serve you as a lesson, you hawk-er of secrets, you dealer in mysteries, you searcher in the darkness, you villian, take these five hundred francs, and be off. Waterloo protects you.”

“Waterloo!” Thénardier growled, as he pocketed the five hundred francs.

“Yes, assassin! you saved the life of a colonel.”

“A general!” Thénardier said, raising his head.

“A colonel,” Marius repeated furiously, “I would not give a farthing for a general.

And you come here to commit an infamy! I tell you that you have committed every crime! Begone! disappear! Be happy, that is all I desire! Ah, monster! here are three thousand francs more: take them. You will start to-morrow for America with your daughter, for your wife is dead, you abominable liar! I will watch over your departure, bandit, and at the moment when you set sail, pay you twenty thousand francs. Go and get hanged elsewhere.”

“Monsieur le Baron,” Thénardier answered, bowing low to the ground, “accept my eternal gratitude.”

And Thénardier left the room, understanding nothing of all this, but stupefied and ravished by this sweet crushing under bags of gold, and this lightning flashing over his head in the shape of bank-notes. Let us finish at once with this man: two days after the events we have just recorded he started for America, under a false name, with his daughter Azelma, and provided with an order on a New York banker for twenty thousand francs. The moral misery of Thénardier, the spoiled bourgeois, was irremediable, and he was in America what he had been in Europe. The contact with a wicked man is sometimes sufficient to rot a good action, and to make something bad issue from it; with Marius’ money Thénardier turned slave-dealer.

So soon as Thénardier had departed, Marius ran into the garden where Cosette was still walking.

“Cosette, Cosette,” he cried, “come, come quickly, let us be off. Basque, a hackney coach. Cosette, come! oh heavens! it was he who saved my life! let us not lose a minute! Put on your shawl.”

Cosette thought him mad, and obeyed. He could not breathe, and laid his hand on his heart to check its beating. He walked up and down with long strides, and embraced Cosette, “O Cosette,” he said, “I am a scoundrel.” Marius was amazed, for he was beginning to catch a glimpse of some strange, lofty, and sombre figure in this Jean Valjean. An extraordinary virtue appeared to him, supreme and gentle, and humble in its immensity, and the convict was transfigured into Christ. Marius was dazzled by this prodigy, and though he knew not exactly what he saw, it was grand. In an instant the hackney-coach was at the gate. Marius helped Cosette in and followed her.

"Driver," he cried, "No 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

"Oh, how glad I am," said Cosette, "Rue de l'Homme Armé, I did not dare speak to you about Monsieur Jean, but we are going to see him."

"Your father, Cosette! your father more than ever. Cosette, I see it all. You told me you never received the letter I sent you by Gavroche. It must have fallen into his hands, Cosette, and he came to the barricade to save me. As it is his sole duty to be an angel, in passing he saved others: he saved Javert. He drew me out of that gulf to give me to you; he carried me on his back through that frightful sewer. Ah, I am a monstrous ingrate! Cosette, after having been your providence, he was mine. Just imagine that there was a horrible pit, in which a man could be drowned a hundred times, drowned in mud, Cosette; and he carried me through it. I had fainted; I saw nothing, I heard nothing, I could not know anything about my own adventures. We are going to bring him back with us, and whether he is willing or not he shall never leave us again. I only hope he is at home! I only hope we shall find him! I will spend the rest of my life in revering him. Yes, it must have been so, Cosette, and Gavroche must have given him my letter. That explains everything. You understand."

Cosette did not understand a word.

"You are right," she said to him.

In the meanwhile the hackney-coach rolled along.

## CHAPTER CCLXXIX.

### A NIGHT BEHIND WHICH IS DAY.

AT the knock he heard at his door, Jean Valjean turned round.

"Come in," he said feebly.

The door opened, and Cosette and Marius appeared. Cosette rushed into the room. Marius remained on the threshold, leaning against the door-post.

"Cosette!" said Jean Valjean, and he sat up in his chair, with his arms outstretched and opened, haggard, livid, and sinister, but with an immense joy in his eyes. Cosette, suffocated with emotion, fell on Jean Valjean's breast.

"Father," she said.

Jean Valjean, utterly overcome, stammered, "Cosette! she—you—madame! it is you! oh, my God!"

And clasped in Cosette's arms, he exclaimed.—

"It is you! you are here; you forgive me, then!"

Marius, drooping his eyelids to keep his tears from flowing, advanced a step, and muttered between his lips, which were convulsively clinched to stop his sobs,—

"Father!"

"And you, too, you forgive me," said Jean Valjean.

Marius could not find a word to say, and Jean Valjean added, "Thank you." Cosette took off her shawl, and threw her bonnet on the bed.

"It is in my way," she said.

"And sitting down on the old man's knees, she parted his gray hair with an adorable movement, and kissed his forehead. Jean Valjean, who was wandering, let her do so. Cosette, who only comprehended very vaguely, redoubled her caresses, as if she wished to pay Marius' debt, and Jean Valjean stammered,—

"How foolish a man can be! I fancied that I should not see her again. Just imagine, Monsieur Pontmercy, that at the very moment when you came in I was saying, 'It is all over.' There is her little dress. 'I am a wretched man, I shall not see Cosette again,' I was saying at the very moment when you were coming up the stairs. What an idiot I was! a man can be as idiotic as that! but people count without le bon Dieu, who says,—'Men imagine that they are going to be abandoned; no; things will not happen like that. Down below there is a poor old fellow who wants an angel.' And the angel comes, and he sees Cosette again, and he sees little Cosette again. Oh! I was very unhappy."

For a moment he was unable to speak, then he went on,—

"I really wanted to see Cosette for a little while every now and then, for a heart requires a bone to gnaw. Still, I felt perfectly that I was in the way. I said to myself, They do not want you, so stop in your corner; a man has no right to pay everlasting visits. Ah! blessed be God! I see her again. Do you know, Cosette, that your husband is very handsome? What a pretty

embroidered collar you are wearing, I like that pattern; your husband chose it, did he not? And, then, you will need cashmere shawls. Monsieur Pontmercy, let me call her Cosette, it will not be for long."

And Cosette replied,—

"How unkind to have left us like that! where have you been to? why were you away so long? Formerly, your absences did not last over three or four days. I sent Nicolette, and the answer always was 'He has not returned.' When did you get back? why did you not let us know? are you aware that you are greatly changed? Oh, naughty papa, he has been ill, and we did not know it. Here, Marius, feel how cold his hand is!"

"So you are here! so you forgive me, Monsieur Pontmercy?" Jean Valjean repeated.

At this remark, all that was swelling in Marius' heart found a vent, and he burst forth,—

"Do you hear, Cosette? he asks my pardon. And do you know what he did for me, Cosette? He saved my life, he did more, he gave you to me, and, after saving me, and after giving you to me, Cosette, what did he do for himself? He sacrificed himself, that is the man. And to me, who am so ungrateful, so pitiless, so forgetful, and so guilty, he says, 'Thank you!' Cosette, my whole life spent at this man's feet would be too little. That barricade, that sewer, that furnace, that pit, he went through them all for me and for you, Cosette! He carried me through every form of death, which he held at bay from me and accepted for himself. This man possesses every courage, every virtue, every heroism, and every holiness, and he is an angel, Cosette."

"Stop, stop!" Jean Valjean said in a whisper, "why talk in that way?"

"But why did you not tell me of it?" exclaimed Marius, with a passion in which was veneration, "it is your fault also. You save people's lives, and conceal the fact from them! You do more; under the pretext of unmasking yourself, you calumniate yourself. It is frightful."

"I told you the truth," Jean Valjean replied.

"No," Marius retorted, "the truth is the whole truth, and you did not tell that. You were Monsieur Madeleine, why not tell me so? You saved Javert, why not tell me so? I owed you life, why not tell me so?"

"Because I thought like you, and found that you were right. It was necessary that I should leave you. Had you known of the sewer you would have compelled me to remain with you, and hence I held my tongue. Had I spoken, I should have been in the way."

"Been in the way of whom? of what?" Marius broke out. "Do you fancy that you are going to remain here? We mean to take you back with us. Oh! good heaven! when I think that I only learnt all this by accident! We shall take you away with us, for you form a part of ourselves; you are her father and mine. You shall not spend another day in this frightful house, so do not fancy you will be here to-morrow."

"To-morrow," said Jean Valjean, "I shall be no longer here, but I shall not be at your house."

"What do you mean?" Marius asked. "Oh! no, we shall not let you travel any more; you shall not leave us again, for you belong to us, and we will not let you go."

"This time it is for good," Cosette added, "we have a carriage below, and I mean to carry you off; if necessary, I shall employ force."

And laughing, she feigned to raise the old man in her arms.

"Your room is still all ready in our house," she went on. "If you only knew how pretty the garden is just at present! the azaleas are getting on splendidly; the walks are covered with river sand, and there are little violet shells. You shall eat my strawberries, for it is I who water them. And no more madame and no more Monsieur Jean, for we live in a republic, do we not, Marius? The programme is changed. If you only knew, father, what a sorrow I had; a redbreast had made its nest in a hole in the wall, and a horrible cat killed it for me. My poor, pretty little redbreast, that used to thrust its head out of its window and look at me! I cried at it, and could have killed the cat! But now, nobody weeps, everybody laughs, everybody is happy. You will come with us; how pleased grandfather will be! You will have your bed in the garden, you will cultivate it, and we will see whether your strawberries are as fine as mine. And, then, I will do all you wish, and you will obey me."

Jean Valjean listened without hearing; he heard the music of her voice rather than the



meaning of her words, and one of those heavy tears, which are the black pearls of the soul, slowly collected in his eye. He murmured,—

“The proof that God is good is that she is here.”

“My father!” said Cosette.

Jean Valjean continued,—

“It is true it would be charming to live together. They have their trees full of birds, and I should walk about with Cosette. It is sweet to be with persons who live, who say to each other good morning, and call each other in the garden. We should each cultivate a little bed, she would give me her strawberries to eat, and I would let her pick my roses. It would be delicious, but—”

He broke off, and said gently, “It is a pity.”

The tear did not fall, it was recalled, and Jean Valjean substituted a smile for it. Cosette took both the old man’s hands in hers.

“Good Heaven!” she said, “your hands have grown colder. Can you be ill? are you suffering?”

“I—no,” Jean Valjean replied; “I am quite well. It is only—” He stopped.

“Only what?”

“I am going to die directly.”

Marius and Cosette shuddered.

“Die!” Marius exclaimed.

“Yes, but that is nothing,” said Jean Valjean.

He breathed, smiled, and added,—

“Cosette, you were talking to me, go on, speak again, [your redbreast is dead, then? speak, that I may hear your voice.”

Marius, who was petrified, looked at the old man, and Cosette uttered a piercing shriek.

“Father, father, you will live! you are going to live. I insist on your living, do you hear?”

Jean Valjean raised his head to her, with adoration.

“Oh yes, forbid me dying. Who knows? Perhaps I shall obey. I was on the road to death when you arrived, but that stopped me. I fancied I was recovering.”

“You are full of strength and life,” Marius exclaimed, “can you suppose that a man dies like that? You have known grief, but you shall know no more. It is I who ask pardon of you on my knees! You are going to live, and live with us, and live a long time. We

will take you with us, and shall have henceforth but one thought, your happiness!”

“You hear,” said Cosette, who was weeping tearfully, “Marius says that you will not die.”

Jean Valjean continued to smile.

“Even if you were to take me home with you, Monsieur Pontmercy, would that prevent me being what I am? No. God has thought the same as you and I, and He does not alter His opinion. It is better for me to be gone. Death is an excellent arrangement, and God knows better than we do what we want. I am certain that it is right, that you should be happy, that Monsieur Pontmercy should have Cosette, that youth should espouse the dawn, that there should be around you, my children, lilacs and nightingales, that your life should be a lawn bathed in sunlight, that all the enchantments of heaven should fill your souls, and that I who am good for nothing should now die. Come, be reasonable, nothing is possible now, and I fully feel that all is over. An hour ago I had a fainting-fit, and last night I drank the whole of that jug of water. How kind your husband is, Cosette! You are much better with him than with me!”

There was a noise at the door; it was the physician come to pay his visit.

“Good-day, and good-bye, doctor,” said Jean Valjean, “here are my poor children.”

Marius went up to the physician, and addressed but one word to him, “Sir?”—but in the manner of pronouncing it there was a whole question. The physician answered the question by an expressive glance.

“Because things are unpleasant,” said Jean Valjean, “that is no reason to be unjust to God.”

There was a silence, and every chest was oppressed. Jean Valjean turned to Cosette, and began contemplating, as if he wished to take the glance with him into eternity. In the deep shadow into which he had already sunk ecstasy was still possible for him in regarding Cosette. The reflection of her sweet countenance illumined his pale face, for the sepulchre may have its brilliancy. The physician felt his pulse.

“Ah, it was you that he wanted,” he said, looking at Marius and Cosette.

And bending down to Marius’ ear, he whispered,—“Too late.”

Jean Valjean, almost ceasing to regard

Cosette, looked at Marius and the physician with serenity, and the scarcely articulated words could be heard pass his lips.

"It is nothing to die, but it is frightful not to live."

All at once he rose—such return of strength is at times a sequel of the death-agony. He walked with a firm step to the wall, thrust aside Marius and the doctor, who wished to help him, detached from the wall the small copper crucifix hanging on it, returned to his seat with all the vigor of full health, and said, as he laid the crucifix on the table,—

"There is the great Martyr."

Then his chest sank in, his head vacillated, as if the intoxication of the tomb were seizing on him, and his hands, lying on his knees, began pulling at the cloth of his trousers. Cosette supported his shoulders and sobbed, and tried to speak to him, but was unable to do so. Through the words mingled with that lugubrious saliva which accompanies tears, such sentences as this could be distinguished. "Father, do not leave us. Is it possible that we have only found you again to lose you?" It might be said that the death-agony moves like a serpent; it comes, goes, advances toward the grave, and then turns back toward life; there is groping in the action of death. Jean Valjean, after this partial syncope, rallied, shook his forehead as if to make the darkness fall off it, and became again almost quite livid. He caught hold of Cosette's sleeve and kissed it.

"He is recovering; doctor, he is recovering," Marius cried.

"You are both good," said Jean Valjean, and I am going to tell you what causes me sorrow. It causes me sorrow, Monsieur Pontmercy, that you have refused to touch that money, but it is really your wife's. I will explain to you, my children, and that is why I am so glad to see you. Black jet comes from England, and white jet from Norway; it is all in that paper there which you will read. I invented the substitution of rolled up snaps for welded snaps in bracelets; they are prettier, better and not so dear. You can understand what money can be earned by it; so Cosette's fortune is really hers. I give you these details that your mind may be at rest."

The porter's wife had come up, and was peeping through the open door: the physi-

cian sent her off, but could not prevent the zealous old woman shouting to the dying man before she went.

"Will you have a priest?"

"I have one," Jean Valjean answered.

And he seemed to point with his finger to a spot over his head, where he might have been fancied to see some one; it is probable, in truth, that the bishop was present at this death scene. Cosette gently placed a pillow behind Jean Valjean's loins and he continued,—

"Monsieur Pontmercy, have no fears, I conjure you. The six hundred thousand francs are really Cosette's! I should have thrown away my life if you refused to employ them! We had succeeded in making those beads famously, and we competed with what is called Berlin jewelry. For instance, the black beads of Germany cannot be equalled, for a gross, which contains twelve hundred well-cut beads, only costs three francs."

When a being who is dear to us is about to die, we regard him with a glance which grapples him and would like to retain him. Cosette and Marius stood before him hand in hand, dumb through agony, not knowing what to say to death, despairing and trembling. With each moment Jean Valjean declined and approached nearer to the dark horizon. His breathing had become intermittent, and a slight rattle impeded it. He had a difficulty in moving his forearm, his feet had lost all movement, and at the same time, as the helplessness of the limbs and the exhaustion of the body increased, all the majesty of the soul ascended and was displayed on his forehead. The light of the unknown world was already visible in his eyeballs. His face grew livid and at the same time smiling; life was no longer there, but there was something else. His breath stopped, but his glance expanded; he was a corpse on whom wings could be seen. He made Cosette a sign to approach, and then Marius; it was evidently the last minute of the last hour, and he began speaking to them in so faint a voice that it seemed to come from a distance, and it was as if there were a wall between them and him.

"Come hither, both of you, I love you dearly. Oh! how pleasant it is to die like this! You, too, love me, my Cosette; I felt certain that you had always a fondness for the poor old man. How kind it was of you

to place that pillow under my loins! You will weep for me a little, will you not? but not too much, for I do not wish you to feel real sorrow. You must amuse yourselves greatly, my children. I forgot to tell you that more profit was made on the buckles without tongues than on all the rest; the gross cost two francs to produce, and sold for sixty. It was really a good trade, so you must not feel surprised at the six hundred thousand francs, Monsieur Pontmercy. It is honest money. You can be rich without any fear. You must have a carriage, now and then a box at the opera, handsome ball-dresses, my Cosette, and give good dinners to your friends, and be very happy. I was writing just now to Cosette. She will find my letter. To her I leave the two candlesticks on the mantel-piece. They are silver, but to me they are made of gold, of diamonds; they change the candles placed in them into consecrated tapers. I know not whether the man who gave them to me is satisfied with me above, but I have done what I could. My children, you will not forget that I am a poor man, you will have me buried in some corner with a stone to mark the spot. That is my wish. No name on the stone. If Cosette comes to see it now and then, it will cause me pleasure. And you, too, Monsieur Pontmercy. I must confess to you that I did not always like you, and I ask your forgiveness. Now, she and you are only one for me. I am very grateful to you, for I feel that you render Cosette happy. If you only knew, Monsieur Pontmercy, her pretty pink cheeks were my joy, and when I saw her at all pale, I was miserable. There is in the chest of drawers a five hundred franc note. I have not touched it, for it is for the poor, Cosette. Do you see your little dress there on the bed? do you recognize it? and yet it was only ten years ago! How time passes! We have been very happy, and it is all over. Do not weep, my children, I am not going very far, and I shall see you from there, you will only have to look when it is dark, and you will see me smile. Cosette, do you remember Montfermeil? You were in the wood and very frightened; do you remember when I took the bucket-handle? It was the first time I touched your pretty little hand. It was so cold. Ah, you had red hands in those days miss, but now they are very white. And the large doll? do you remember? You christened it Catherine. and were sorry

that you did not take it with you to the convent. How many times you have made me laugh, my sweet angel! When it had rained you used to set straws floating in the gutter, and watched them go. One day I gave you a wicker battledore and a shuttlecock with yellow, blue and green feathers. You have forgotten it. You were so merry when a little girl. You used to play. You would put cherries in your ears. All these are things of the past. The forests through which you pass with your child, the trees under which you have walked, the convent in which we hid, the sports, the hearty laughter of childhood, are shadows. I imagined that all this belonged to me, and that was my stupidity. Those Thénardiens were very wicked, but we must forgive them. Cosette, the moment has arrived to tell you your mother's name. It was Fantine. Remember this name—Fantine. Fall on your knees every time you pronounce it. She suffered terribly. She loved you dearly. She knew as much misery as you have known happiness. Such are the distributions of God. He is above. He sees us all, and He knows all that He does, amid His great stars. I am going away, my children. Love each other dearly and always. There is no other thing in the world but that; love one another. You will sometimes think of the poor old man who died here. Ah, my Cosette, it is not my fault that I did not see you every day, for it broke my heart. I went as far as the corner of the street, and must have produced a funny effect on the people who saw me pass, for I was like a madman, and even went out without my hat. My children, I can no longer see very clearly. I had several things to say to you, but no matter. Think of me a little. You are blessed beings. I know not what is the matter with me, but I see light. Come hither. I die happy. Let me lay my hands on your beloved heads."

Cosette and Marius fell on their knees heartbroken and choked with sobs, each under one of Jean Valjean's hands. These august hands did not move again. He had fallen back, and the light from the two candles illumined him: his white face looked up to heaven, and he let Cosette and Marius cover his hands with kisses—for he was dead. The night was starless and intensely dark: doubtless some immense angel was standing in the gloom, with outstretched wings, waiting for the soul.

## CHAPTER CCLXXX.

## THE GRASS HIDES, AND THE RAIN EFFACES.

THERE is at the cemetery of Perè-Lachaise, in the vicinity of the poor side, far from the elegant quarter of this city of sepulchres, far from those fantastic tombs which display in the presence of eternity the hideous fashions of death, in a deserted corner near an old wall, under a yew up which bind-weed climbs, and amid couch-grass and moss,—a tombstone. This stone is no more exempt than the others from the results of time, from mildew, lichen, and the deposits of birds. Water turns it green and the atmosphere blackens it. It is not in the vicinity of any path, and people do not care to visit that part, because the grass is tall and they get their feet wet. When

there is a little sunshine the lizards disport on it; there is all around a rustling of wild oats, and in spring linnets sing on the trees.

This tombstone is quite bare. In cutting it, only the necessities of the tomb were taken into consideration; no further care was taken than to make the stone long enough and narrow enough to cover a man.

No name can be read on it.

Many, many years ago, however, a hand wrote on it in pencil these lines, which became almost illegible through rain and dust; and which are probably effaced at the present day.

Il dort. Quoique le sort fût pour lui bien étrange,  
Il vivait. Il mourut quand il n'eut pas son ange;  
La chose simplement d'elle-même arriva,  
Comme la nuit se fait lorsque le jour s'en va.

THE END.

# BY ORDER OF THE KING.

A ROMANCE OF ENGLISH HISTORY.

## PRELIMINARY CHAPTER.

URSUS.

I.

URSUS and Homo were fast friends. Ursus was a man, Homo a wolf. Their dispositions tallied. It was the man who had christened the wolf: probably he had also chosen his own name. Having found *Ursus* fit for himself, he had found *Homo* fit for the beast. Man and wolf turned their partnership to account at fairs, at village fêtes, at the corners of streets where passers-by throng, and out of the need which people seem to feel everywhere to listen to idle gossip, and to buy quack medicine. The wolf, gentle and courteously subordinate, diverted the crowd. It is a pleasant thing to behold the tameness of animals. Our greatest delight is to see all the varieties of domestication parade before us. This it is which collects so many folks on the road of royal processions.

Ursus and Homo went about from cross-road to cross-road, from the High Street of Aberystwith to the High Street of Jedburgh, from country-side to country-side, from shire to shire, from town to town. One market exhausted, they went on to another. Ursus lived in a small van upon wheels, which Homo was civilized enough to draw by day and guard by night. On bad roads, up hills, and where there were too many ruts, or there was too much mud, the man buckled the trace round his neck and pulled fraternally, side by side with the wolf. They had thus grown old together. They encamped at hap-hazard on a common, in the glade of a wood, on the waste patch of grass where roads intersect, at the outskirts of villages, at the gates of towns, in market-places, in public-walks, on the borders of parks, before the entrances of churches. When the cart drew up on a fair green, when the gossips ran up open-mouthed and the curious made a

circle round the pair, Ursus harangued and Homo approved. Homo, with a bowl in his mouth politely made a collection among the audience. They gained their livelihood. The wolf was lettered, likewise the man. The wolf had been trained by the man, or had trained himself unassisted, to divers wolfish arts, which swelled the receipts. "Above all things, do not degenerate into a man," his friend would say to him.

Never did the wolf bite: the man did now and then. At least, to bite was the intent of Ursus. He was a misanthrope, and to italicise his misanthropy he had made himself a juggler. To live, also; for the stomach has to be consulted. Moreover, this juggler-misanthrope, whether to add to the complexity of his being or to perfect it, was a doctor. To be a doctor is little: Ursus was a ventriloquist. You heard him speak without his moving his lips. He counterfeited, so as to deceive you, any one's accent or pronunciation. He imitated voices so exactly that you believed you heard the people themselves. All alone he simulated the murmur of a crowd, and this gave him a right to the title of Engastrimythos, which he took. He reproduced all sorts of cries of birds, as of the thrush, the wren, the pipit lark, otherwise called the grey cheeper, and the ring ousel, all travellers like himself: so that at times when the fancy struck him, he made you aware either of a public thoroughfare filled with the uproar of men, or of a meadow loud with the voices of beasts—at one time stormy as a multitude, at another fresh and serene as the dawn. Such gifts, although rare, exist. In the last century a man called Touzel, who imitated the mingled utterances of men and animals, and who counterfeited all the cries of beasts, was attached to the person of Buffon—to serve as a menagerie.

Ursus was sagacious, contradictory, odd, and inclined to the singular expositions which we term fables. He had the appearance of believing in them, and this impudence was a

part of his humor. He read people's hands, opened books at random and drew conclusions, told fortunes, taught that it is perilous to meet a black mare, still more perilous, as you start for a journey, to hear yourself accosted by one who knows not whither you are going; and he called himself a dealer in superstitions. He used to say: "There is one difference between me and the Archbishop of Canterbury: I avow what I am." Hence it was that the archbishop, justly indignant, had him one day before him; but Ursus cleverly disarmed his grace by reciting a sermon he had composed upon Christmas-day, which the delighted archbishop learnt by heart, and delivered from the pulpit as his own. In consideration thereof the archbishop pardoned Ursus.

As a doctor, Ursus wrought cures by some means or other. He made use of aromatics; he was versed in simples; he made the most of the immense power which lies in a heap of neglected plants, such as the hazel, the catkin, the white alder, the white briony, the mealy-tree, the traveller's joy, the buckthorn. He treated phthisis with the sundew; at opportune moments he would use the leaves of the spurge, which plucked at the bottom are a purgative and plucked at the top, an emetic. He cured sore throat by means of the vegetable excrement called Jew's ear. He knew the rush which cures the ox and the mint which cures the horse. He was well acquainted with the beauties and virtues of the herb mandragora, which, as every one knows, is of both sexes. He had many recipes. He cured burns with the salamander wool, of which, according to Pliny, Nero had a napkin. Ursus possessed a retort and a flask; he effected transmutations; he sold panaceas. It was said of him that he had once been for a short time in Bedlam; they had done him the honor to take him for a madman, but had set him free on discovering that he was only a poet. This story was probably not true; we have all to submit to some such legend about us.

The fact is, Ursus was a bit of a savant, a man of taste, and an old Latin poet. He was learned in two forms; he Hippocratized and he Pindarized. He could have vied in bombast with Rabin and Vida. He could have composed Jesuit tragedies in a style not less triumphant than that of Father Bouhours. It followed from his familiarity with

the venerable rhythms and metres of the ancients, that he had peculiar figures of speech, and a whole family of classical metaphors. He would say of a mother followed by her two daughters, *There is a dactyl*; of a father preceded by his two sons, *There is an anapaest*; and of a little child walking between its grandmother and grandfather, *There is an amphimacer*. So much knowledge could only end in starvation. The school of Salerno says, "Eat little and often." Ursus ate little and seldom, thus obeying one half the precept and disobeying the other; but this was the fault of the public, who did not always flock to him, and who did not often buy.

Ursus was wont to say: "The expectoration of a sentence is a relief. The wolf is comforted by its howl, the sheep by its wool, the forest by its finch, woman by her love, and the philosopher by his epiphonema." Ursus at a pinch composed comedies, which, in recital, he all but acted; this helped to sell the drugs. Among other works, he had composed an heroic pastoral in honor of Sir Hugh Middleton, who in 1608 brought a river to London. The river was lying peacefully in Hertfordshire, twenty miles from London: the knight came and took possession of it. He brought a brigade of six hundred men, armed with shovels and pickaxes; set to breaking up the ground, scooping it out in one place, raising it in another—now thirty feet high, now twenty feet deep; made wooden aqueducts high in air; and at different points constructed eight hundred bridges of stone, bricks, and timber. One fine morning the river entered London, which was short of water. Ursus transformed all these vulgar details into a fine Eclogue between the Thames and the New River, in which the former invited the latter to come to him, and offered her his bed, saying, "I am too old to please women, but I am rich enough to pay them,—an ingenious and gallant conceit to indicate how Sir Hugh Middleton had completed the work at his own expense.

Ursus was great in soliloquy. Of a disposition at once unsociable and talkative, desiring to see no one, yet wishing to converse with some one, he got out of the difficulty by talking to himself. Any one who has lived a solitary life knows how deeply seated monologue is in one's nature. Speech imprisoned frets to find a vent. To harangue space is

an outlet. To speak out aloud when alone is as it were to have a dialogue with the divinity that is within. It was, as is well known, a custom of Socrates; he declaimed to himself. Luther did the same. Ursus took after those great men. He had the hermaphrodite faculty of being his own audience. He questioned himself, answered himself, praised himself, blamed himself. You heard him in the street soliloquizing in his van. The passers-by, who have their own way of appreciating clever people, used to say: He is an idiot. As we have just observed, he abused himself at times; but there were times also when he rendered himself justice. One day, in one of these allocutions addressed to himself, he was heard to cry out, "I have studied vegetation in all its mysteries—in the stalk, in the bud, in the sepal, in the stamen, in the carpel, in the ovule, in the spore, in the theca, and in the apothecium. I have thoroughly sifted chromatics, osmosy, and chymosy; that is to say, the formation of colors, of smell, and of taste." There was something fatuous, doubtless, in the certificate which Ursus gave to Ursus; but let those who have not thoroughly sifted chromatics, osmosy and chymosy cast the first stone at him.

Fortunately Ursus had never gone into the Low Countries; there they would certainly have weighed him, to ascertain whether he was of the normal weight, above or below which a man is a sorcerer. In Holland this weight was sagely fixed by law. Nothing was simpler or more ingenious. It was a clear test. They put you in a scale, and the evidence was conclusive if you broke the equilibrium. Too heavy, you were hanged; too light, you were burned. To this day the scales in which sorcerers were weighed may be seen at Oudewater, but they are now used for weighing cheeses; how religion has degenerated! Ursus would certainly have a crow to pluck with those scales. In his travels he kept away from Holland, and he did well. Indeed, we believed that he used never to leave the United Kingdom.

However this may have been, he was very poor and morose, and having made the acquaintance of Homo in a wood, a taste for a wandering life had come over him. He had taken the wolf into partnership, and with him had gone forth on the highways, living in the open air the great life of chance. He

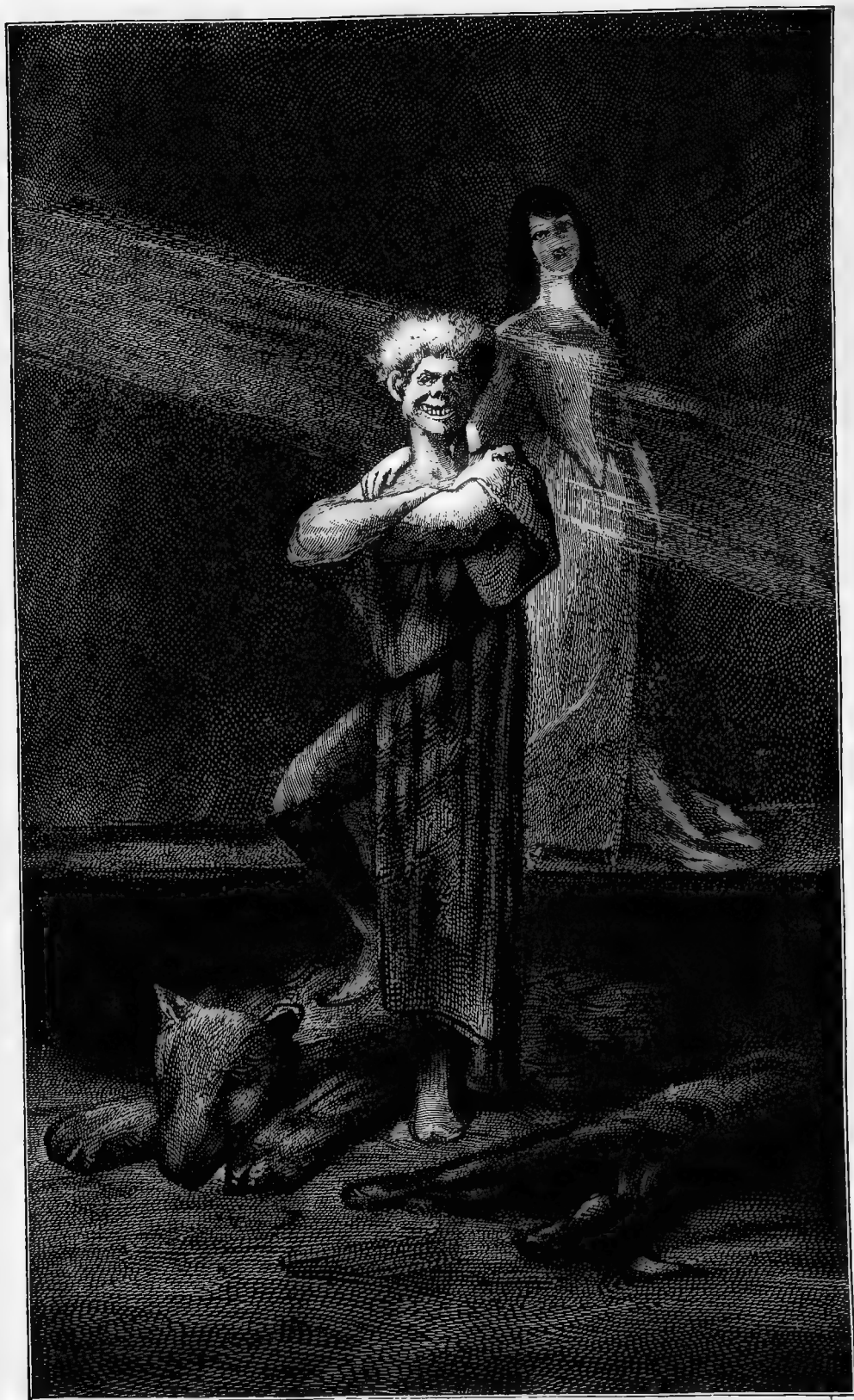
had a great deal of industry and of reserve, and great skill in everything connected with healing operations, restoring the sick to health, and in working wonders peculiar to himself. He was considered a clever mountebank and a good doctor. As may be imagined, he passed for a wizard as well,—not much indeed; only a little, for it was unwholesome in those days to be considered a friend of the devil. To tell the truth, Ursus, by his passion for pharmacy and his love of plants, laid himself open to suspicion, seeing that he often went to gather herbs in rough he thickets where grew Lucifer's salads, and where, as has been proved by the Counsellor De l'Ancre, there is a risk of meeting in the evening mist a man who comes out of the earth, "blind of the right eye, bare-footed, without a cloak, and a sword by his side." But for the matter of that, Ursus, although eccentric in manner and disposition, was too good a fellow to invoke or disperse hail, to make faces appear, to kill a man with the torment of excessive dancing, to suggest dreams fair or foul and full of terror, and to cause the birth of cocks with four wings. He had no such mischievous tricks. He was incapable of certain abominations, such as, for instance, speaking German, Hebrew, or Greek, without having learned them, which is a sign of unpardonable wickedness, or of a natural infirmity proceeding from a morbid humor. If Ursus spoke Latin, it was because he knew it. He never would have allowed himself to speak Syriac, which he did not know. Besides, it is asserted that Syriac, is the language spoken in the midnight meetings at which uncanny people worship the devil. In medicine he justly preferred Galen to Cardan; Cardan, although a learned man, being but an earthworm to Galen.

To sum up, Ursus was not one of those persons who live in fear of the police. His van was long enough and wide enough to allow of his lying down in it on a box containing his not very sumptuous apparel. He owned a lantern, several wigs, and some utensils suspended from nails, among which were musical instruments. He possessed, besides, a bearskin with which he covered himself on his days of grand performance. He called this putting on full dress. He used to say, "I have two skins; this is the real one," pointing to the bearskin.

The little house on wheels belonged to him-







CHAOS VANQUISHED.

self and to the wolf. Besides his house, his retort, and his wolf, he had a flute and a violoncello on which he played prettily. He concocted his own elixirs. His wits yielded him enough to sup on sometimes. In the top of his van was a hole, through which passed the pipe of a cast-iron stove; so close to his box as to scorch the wood of it. The stove had two compartments, in one of them Ursus cooked his chemicals, and in the other his potatoes. At night the wolf slept under the van, amicably secured by a chain. Homo's hair was black, that of Ursus, gray; Ursus was fifty, unless, indeed, he was sixty. He accepted his destiny, to such an extent that, as we have just seen, he ate potatoes, the trash on which at that time they fed pigs and convicts. He ate them indignant, but resigned. He was not tall—he was long. He was bent and melancholy. The bowed frame of an old man is the settlement in the architecture of life. Nature had formed him for sadness. He found it difficult to smile, and he had never been able to weep, so that he was deprived of the consolation of tears, as well as the palliative of joy. An old man is a thinking ruin; and such a ruin was Ursus. He had the loquacity of a charlatan, the leanness of a prophet, the irascibility of a charged mine: such was Ursus. In his youth he had been a philosopher in the house of a lord.

This was 180 years ago, when men were more like wolves than they are now.

Not so very much though.

## II.

Homo was no ordinary wolf. From his appetite for medlars and potatoes he might have been taken for a prairie wolf; from his dark hide, for a lycan; and from his howl prolonged into a bark, for a dog of Chili. But no one has as yet observed the eyeball of a dog of Chili sufficiently to enable us to determine whether he be not a fox, and Homo was a real wolf. He was five feet long, which is a fine length for a wolf, even in Lithuania; he was very strong; he looked at you askance which was not his fault; he had a soft tongue, with which he occasionally licked Ursus; he had a narrow brush of short bristles on his backbone, and he was lean with the wholesome leanness of a forest life. Before he knew Ursus and had a carriage to draw, he

thought nothing of doing his fifty miles a night. Ursus, meeting him in a thicket near a stream of running water, had conceived a high opinion of him from seeing the skill and sagacity with which he fished out crayfish, and welcomed him as an honest and genuine Koupara wolf of the kind called crab-eater.

As a beast of burthen Ursus preferred Homo to a donkey. He would have felt repugnance to having his hut drawn by an ass; he thought too highly of the ass for that. Moreover he had observed that the ass, a four-legged thinker little understood by men, has a habit of cocking his ears uneasily when philosophers talk nonsense. In life the ass is a third person between our thoughts and ourselves, and acts as a restraint. As a friend, Ursus preferred Homo to a dog, considering that the love of a wolf is more rare.

Hence it was that Homo sufficed for Ursus. Homo was for Ursus more than a companion, he was an analogue. Ursus used to pat the wolf's empty ribs, saying: "I have found the second volume of myself!" Again he said, "When I am dead, any one wishing to know me need only study Homo. I shall leave a true copy behind me."

The English law, not very lenient to beasts of the forest, might have picked a quarrel with the wolf, and have put him to trouble for his assurance in going freely about the towns: but Homo took advantage of the immunity granted by a statute of Edward IV. to servants: "Every servant in attendance on his master is free to come and go." Besides, a certain relaxation of the law had resulted with regard to wolves, in consequence of its being the fashion of the ladies of the Court, under the later Stuarts, to have, instead of dogs, little wolves, called adives, about the size of cats, which were brought from Asia at great cost.

Ursus had communicated to Homo a portion of his talents; such as to stand upright, to restrain his rage into sulkiness, to growl instead of howling, etc.; and on his part, the wolf had taught the man what *he* knew,—to do without a roof, without bread and fire, to prefer hunger in the woods to slavery in a palace.

The van, hut, and vehicle in one, which traversed so many different roads, without, however, leaving Great Britain, had four wheels, with shafts for the wolf and a splinter-

bar for the man. The splinter-bar came into use when the roads were bad. The van was strong, although it was built of light boards like a dove-cot. In front there was a glass door with a little balcony used for orations, which had something of the character of the platform tempered by an air of the pulpit. At the back there was a door with a practicable panel. By lowering the three steps which turned on a hinge below the door, access was gained to the hut, which at night was securely fastened with bolt and lock. Rain and snow had fallen plentifully on it; it had been painted, but of what color it was difficult to say, change of season being to vans what changes of reign are to courtiers. In front, outside, was a board,—a kind of frontispiece, on which the following inscription might once have been deciphered; it was in black letters on a white ground, but by degrees the characters had become confused and blurred:

“By friction gold loses every year a fourteen hundredth part of its bulk. This is what is called the Wear. Hence it follows that on fourteen hundred millions of gold in circulation throughout the world, one million is lost annually. This million dissolves into dust, flies away, floats about, is reduced to atoms, charges, drugs, weighs down consciences, amalgamates with the souls of the rich whom it renders proud, and with those of the poor whom it renders brutish.”

The inscription, rubbed and blotted by the rain and by the kindness of nature, was fortunately illegible, for it is possible that its philosophy concerning the inhalation of gold, at the same time both enigmatical and lucid, might not have been to the taste of the sheriffs, the provost-marshals and other big-wigs of the law. English legislation did not trifle in those days. It did not take much to make a man a felon. The magistrates were ferocious by tradition, and cruelty was a matter of routine. The judges of assize increased and multiplied. Jefferies had become a breed.

### III.

IN the interior of the van there were two other inscriptions. Above the box, on a whitewashed plank, a hand had written in ink as follows:—

“THE ONLY THINGS NECESSARY TO KNOW.\*

“The Baron, peer of England, wears a cap with six pearls. The coronet begins with the rank of Viscount. The Viscount wears a coronet of which the pearls are without number. The Earl a coronet with the pearls

\* A translator as a rule has no right to interfere with the text of the Author. I hope, however, that I may be excused for having ventured to correct some manifest slips which M. Hugo has made in preparing for Ursus the description of the rights and privileges of the English peerage. I have not, indeed, corrected all mistakes. Thus, for example, in the very first sentences of this passage about the peerage, it is stated that the baron wears only a cap, and that the viscount is the lowest rank of peer entitled to a coronet. This was true up to the end of Charles the Second's reign. It is not true now, and it was not true at the time when Ursus wrote. Yet it was a statement which he might reasonably have supposed to be true, and therefore I have let it remain. I have even ventured to pass anachronisms of the opposite kind—where Ursus speaks of that as existing which had not yet come to pass. Thus there will be found among his list of great peers, at the period of the Revolution, some titles, as those of Lord Grantham, Lonsdale, Scarborough, Kent, and Coningsby, which were not created till afterwards—when the century was at its close, or even when the next century had commenced. These are errors of detail which do not interfere with the general truth of the picture. With other statements which never were at any time true, I have been less tender. Thus I have struck out the statement, that on the top of Devonshire House, there was a lion which turned its tail on the king's palace. Again, where the writer states that daily in the king's palace there were eighty-six tables spread, each with 500 dishes,—I have ventured to give the true statement that there were 500 dishes in all. And so with some other details. With a few passages I have had a little difficulty in deciding how to deal. Thus Victor Hugo makes his hero write—“Toute fille de lord est *lady*. Tes autres filles anglaises sont *miss*.” With regard to the first of these statements it is well known that every daughter of a peer does not bear the title of lady; it is only the daughters of a duke, a marquis or an earl, who are so honored. Still, in the general obfuscation of intellect which titular niceties are apt to produce. Ursus might be supposed likely to designate as *lady* every peer's daughter whomsoever. On the other hand, the daughters of commoners were not called *miss* in those days, and I have made bold to give the title which Ursus must have known. Let me add that most of the details as to THE ONLY THINGS NECESSARY TO KNOW are borrowed from Chamberlayne's well-known work, *The Present State of England*, and that I am a little surprised at the omission by M. Victor Hugo and his hero Ursus of one curious touch which will be found in Chamberlayne's chapter on the peerage—“No viscount is to wash with a marquis, but at his pleasure.”—TRANSLATOR.

upon points, mingled with strawberry leaves placed low between. The Marquis, one with pearls and leaves on the same level. The Duke, one with strawberry leaves alone—no pearls. The Royal Duke, a circlet of crosses and fleurs-de-lys. The Prince of Wales, crown like that of the king, but unclosed.

"The Duke is a most high and most puissant prince, the Marquis and Earl most noble and puissant lord, the Viscount noble and puissant lord, the Baron a trusty lord. The Duke is his Grace; the other peers their lordships. *Most honorable* is higher than *right honorable*.

"Lords who are peers are lords in their own right. Lords who are not peers are lords by courtesy:—there are no real lords, excepting such as are peers.

"The House of Lords is a chamber and a Court, *Concilium et Curia*, legislature and court of justice. The Commons, who are the people, when ordered to the bar of the Lords, humbly present themselves bareheaded before the peers, who remain covered. The Commons send up their bills by forty members, who present the bill with three low bows. The Lords send their bills to the Commons by a mere clerk. In case of disagreement, the two Houses confer in the Painted Chamber, the Peers seated and covered the Commons standing and bareheaded.

"Peers go to Parliament in their coaches in file; the Commons do not. Some peers go to Westminster in open four-wheeled chariots. The use of these and of coaches emblazoned with coats of arms and coronets is allowed only to peers, and forms a portion of their dignity.

"Barons have the same rank as bishops. To be a baron peer of England, it is necessary to be in possession of a tenure from the king *per Baroniam integram*, by full barony. The full barony consists of thirteen knights' fees and one-third part, each knight's fee being of the value of 20*l* sterling, which makes in all four hundred marks. The head of a barony (*Caput baroniæ*) is a castle disposed by inheritance, as England herself, that is to say, descending to daughters if there be no sons, and in that case going to the eldest daughter *cæteris filiabus aliundè satisfactis*.\*

\* As much as to say, the other daughters are provided for as best may be. (Note by Ursus on the margin of the wall.)

"Barons have the decreè of lord; in Saxon, *laford*; *dominus* in high Latin; *Lordus* in low Latin. The eldest and younger sons of viscounts and barons are the first esquires in the kingdom. The eldest sons of peers take precedence of knights of the garter. The younger sons do not. The eldest son of a viscount comes after all barons, and precedes all baronets. Every daughter of a peer is a *Lady*. Other English girls are plain *Mistress*.

"All judges rank below peers. The serjeant wears a lambskin tippet; the judge one of patchwork, *de minuto vario*, made up of a variety of little white furs, always excepting ermine. Ermine is reserved for peers and the king.

"A lord never takes an oath, either to the crown or the law. His word suffices; he says, Upon my honor.

"By a law of Edward the Sixth, peers have the privilege of committing manslaughter. A peer who kills a man without premeditation is not prosecuted.

"The persons of peers are inviolable.

"A peer cannot be held in durance, save in the Tower of London.

"A writ of *supplicavit* cannot be granted against a peer.

"A peer sent for by the king has the right to kill one or two deer in the royal park.

"A peer holds in his castle a baron's court of justice.

"It is unworthy of a peer to walk the street in a cloak, followed by two footmen. He should only show himself attended by a great train of gentlemen of his household.

"A peer can be amerced only by his peers, and never to any greater amount than five pounds, excepting in the case of a duke, who can be amerced ten.

"A peer may retain six aliens born, any other Englishman but four.

"A peer can have wine custom-free; an earl eight tuns.

"A peer is alone exempt from presenting himself before the sheriff of the circuit.

"A peer cannot be assessed towards the militia.

"When it pleases a peer he raises a regiment and gives it to the king; thus have done their graces the Dukes of Athol, Hamilton and Northumberland. ~

"A peer can hold only of a peer.

"In a civil cause he can demand the ad-

jourment of the case, if there be not at least one knight on the jury.

"A peer nominates his own chaplains. A baron appoints three chaplains; a viscount four; an earl and a marquis five; a duke six.

"A peer cannot be put to the rack, even for high treason. A peer cannot be branded on the hand. A peer is a clerk, though he knows not how to read. In law he knows.

"A duke has a right to a canopy, or cloth of state, in all places where the king is not present; a viscount may have one in his house; a baron has a cover of assay, which may be held under his cup while he drinks. A baroness has the right to have her train borne by a man in the presence of a viscountess.

"Eighty-six tables, with five hundred dishes, are served every day in the royal palace at each meal.\*

"If a plebian strike a lord, his hand is cut off.

"A lord is very nearly a king.

"The king is very nearly a god.

"The earth is a lordship.

"The English address God as my lord!"

Opposite this writing was written a second one, in the same fashion, which ran thus:—

\* This sentence is probably derived from the following passage in Chamberlayne's book, but in the French version it has suffered some alteration in the process of transition:—"The magnificent and abundant plenty of the king's tables hath caused amazement in foreigners; when they have been informed that in King Charles I.'s reign, before the troubles when his Majesty had the purveyance, there were daily in his court 86 tables well furnished each meal, whereof the king's table had 28 dishes, the queen's 24; four other tables, 16 dishes each; three other, 10 dishes each; twelve other had 7 dishes each; seventeen other tables had each of them 5 dishes; three other had 4 each; thirty-two other tables had each 3 dishes; and thirteen other had each 2 dishes;—in all about 500 dishes each meal, with bread, beer, wine, and all other things necessary. All which was provided most by the several purveyers, who, by summons legally and regularly authorized, did receive those provisions at a moderate price such as had been formally agreed upon in the several counties of England."

The next sentence has been allowed to stand as in the original, but it is probably based on the following from Chamberlayne:—"The king's court or house where the king resideth, is accounted a place so sacred that if any man presume to strike another within the palace where the king's royal person resideth, and by such stroke only draw blood, his right hand shall be stricken off, and he committed to perpetual imprisonment and fined."—TRANSLATOR.

"SATISFACTION WHICH MUST SUFFICE THOSE WHO HAVE NOTHING.

"Henry Auverquerque, Earl of Grantham, who sits in the House of Lords between the Earl of Jersey and the Earl of Greenwich, has a hundred thousand a year. To his lordship belongs the palace of Grantham Terrace, built all of marble and famous for what is called the labyrinth of passages—a curiosity which contains the scarlet corridor in marble of Sarancolin, the brown corridor in lumachel of Astracan, the white corridor in marble of Lani, the black corridor in marble of Alabanda, the gray corridor in marble of Staremma, the yellow corridor in marble of Hesse, the green corridor in marble of the Tyrol, the red corridor, half cherry-spotted marble of Bohemia, half lumachel of Cordova, the blue corridor in turquin of Genoa, the violet in granite of Catalonia, the mourning-hued corridor veined black and white in slate of Murviedro, the pink corridor in cipolin of the Alps, the pearl corridor in lumachel of Nonetta, and the corridor of all colors, called the courtier's corridor, in motley.

"Richard Lowther, Viscount Lonsdale, owns Lowther in Westmoreland, which has a magnificent approach, and a flight of entrance steps which seem to invite the ingress of kings.

"Richard, Earl of Scarborough, Viscount and Baron Lumley of Lumley Castle, Viscount Lumley of Waterford in Ireland, and Lord Lieutenant and Vice-Admiral of the county of Northumberland and of Durham, both city and county, owns the double castleward of old and new Sandbeck, where you admire a superb railing, in the form of a semicircle, surrounding the basin of a matchless fountain. He has, besides, his castle of Lumley.

"Robert Darcy, Earl of Holderness, has his domain of Holderness, with baronial towers, and large gardens laid out in French fashion, where he drives in his coach-and-six, preceded by two outriders, as becomes a peer of England.

"Charles Beauclerc, Duke of St. Alban's, Earl of Burford, Baron Hedington, Grand Falconer of England, has an abode at Windsor, regal even by the side of the king's.

"Charles Bodville Robartes, Baron Robartes of Truro, Viscount Bodmin and Earl of Radnor, owns Wimpole in Cambridgeshire, which is at three palaces in one, having three

façades, one bowed and two triangular. The approach is by an avenue of trees four deep.

"The most noble and most puissant Lord Philip, Baron Herbert of Cardiff, Earl of Montgomery and of Pembroke, Ross of Kendall, Parr, Fitzhugh, Marmion, St. Quentin, and Herbert of Shurland, Warden of the Stannaries in the Counties of Cornwall and Devon, hereditary visitor of Jesus College, possesses the wonderful gardens at Wilton, where there are two sheaf-like fountains, finer than those of his most Christian Majesty King Louis XIV. at Versailles.

"Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, owns Somerset House on the Thames, which is equal to the Villa Pamphili at Rome. On the chimney-piece are seen two porcelain vases of the dynasty of the Yuens, which are worth half a million in French money.

"In Yorkshire, Arthur, Lord Ingram, Viscount Irwin, has Temple Newsam, which is entered under a triumphal arch, and which has large wide roofs resembling Moorish terraces.

"Robert, Lord Ferrers of Chartly, Bourchier and Louvaine, has Staunton Harold in Leicestershire, of which the Park is geometrically planned in the shape of a temple with a façade, and in front of the piece of water is the great church with the square belfry, which belongs to his lordship.

"In the county of Northampton, Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland, member of His Majesty's Privy Council, possesses Althorp, at the entrance of which is a railing with four columns surmounted by groups in marble.

"Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, has, in Surrey, New Park, rendered magnificent by its sculptured pinnacles, its circular lawn belted by trees, and its woodland, at the extremity of which is a little mountain, artistically rounded, and surmounted by a large oak, which can be seen from afar.

"Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, possesses Bretby Hall in Derbyshire, with a splendid clock tower, falconries, warrens, and very fine sheets of water, long, square, and oval, one of which is shaped like a mirror, and has two jets, which throw the water to a great height.

"Charles Cornwallis, Baron Cornwallis of Eye, owns Broome Hall, a palace of the fourteenth century.

"The most noble Algernon Capel, Viscount Malden, Earl of Essex, has a Cashibury in

Hertfordshire, a seat which has the shape of a capital H, and which rejoices sportsmen with its abundance of game.

"Charles, Lord Ossulston, owns Darnley in Middlesex, approached by Italian gardens.

"James Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, has, seven leagues from London, Hatfield House, with its four lordly pavilions, its belfry in the centre, and its grand court-yard of black and white slabs, like that of St. Germain. This palace, which has a frontage 262 ft. in length, was built in the reign of James I. by the Lord High Treasurer of England, the great grandfather of the present earl. To be seen there is the bed of one of the Countesses of Salisbury; it is of inestimable value and made entirely of Brazilian wood, which is a panacea against the bites of serpents, and which is called *milhombres*, that is to say a thousand men. On this bed is inscribed, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*.

"Edward Rich, Earl of Warwick and Holland, is owner of Warwick Castle, where whole oats are burnt in the fireplaces.

"In the parish of Sevenoaks, Charles Sackville, Baron Buckhurst, Baron Cranfield, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, is owner of Knowle, which is as large as a town and is composed of three palaces standing parallel one behind the other, like ranks of infantry. There are six covered flights of steps on the principal frontage, and a gate under a keep with four towers.

"Thomas Thynne, Baron Thynne of Warminster, and Viscount Weymouth, possesses Longleat, in which there are as many chimneys, cupolas, pinnacles, pepper-boxes, pavilions, and turrets, as at Chambord, in France, which belongs to the king.

"Henry Howard, Earl of Suffolk, owns twelve leagues from London, the palace of Audley End in Essex, which in grandeur and dignity scarcely yields the palm to the Escorial of the King of Spain.

In Bedfordshire, Wrest House and Park, which is a whole district, enclosed by ditches, walls, woodlands, rivers, and hills, belongs to Henry, Marquis of Kent.

"Hampton Court, in Herefordshire, with its strong embattled keep, and its gardens bounded by a piece of water which divides them from the forest, belongs to Thomas, Lord Coningsby.

"Grimsthorp, in Lincolnshire, with its long façade intersected by turrets in pale, its park,

its fish-ponds, its pheasantries, its sheepfolds, its lawns, its grounds planted with rows of trees, its groves, its walks, its shrubberies, its flower-beds and borders, formed in square and lozenge-shape, and resembling great carpets; its race-courses, and the majestic sweep for carriages to turn in at the entrance of the house—belongs to Robert, Earl Lindsey, hereditary lord of the forest of Waltham.

“Up Park, in Sussex, a square house, with two symmetrical belfried pavilions on each side of the great courtyard, belongs to the Right Honourable Forde, Baron Grey of Werke, Viscount Glendale and Earl of Tankerville.

“Newnham Paddox, in Warwickshire, which has two quadrangular fish-ponds and a gabled archway with a large window of four panes, belongs to the Earl of Denbigh, who is also Count von Rheinfelden, in Germany.

“Wytham Abbey, in Berkshire, with its French garden in which there are four curiously trimmed arbors, and its great embattled towers, supported by two bastions, belongs to Montague, Earl of Abingdon, who also owns Rycote, of which he is Baron, and the principal door of which bears the device *Virtus ariete fortior*.

“William Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, has six dwelling-places, of which Chatsworth (two-storied, and the finest order of Grecian architecture) is one.

“The Viscount of Kinalmeaky, who is Earl of Cork, in Ireland, is owner of Burlington House, Piccadilly, with its extensive gardens, reaching to the fields outside London; he is also owner of Chiswick, where there are nine magnificent lodges; he also owns Londesborough, which is a new house by the side of an old palace.

“The Duke of Beaufort owns Chelsea, which contains two Gothic buildings, and a Florentine one; he has also Badminton, in Gloucestershire, a residence from which a number of avenues branch out like rays from a star. The most noble and puissant Prince Henry, Duke of Beaufort, is also Marquis and Earl of Worcester, Earl of Glamorgan, Viscount Grosmont, and Baron Herbert of Chepstow, Ragland, and Gower, Baron Beaufort of Caldecott Castle, and Baron de Botetourt.

“John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, and Marquis of Clare, owns Bolsover, with its majestic square keeps; his also, is Haughton,

in Nottinghamshire, where a round pyramid, made to imitate the Tower of Babel, stands in the centre of a basin of water.

“William, Earl of Craven, Viscount Uffington, and Baron Craven of Hamstead Marshall, owns Combe Abbey in Warwickshire, where is to be seen the finest water-jet in England; and in Berkshire two baronies, Hamstead Marshall, on the façade of which are five Gothic lanterns sunk in the wall, and Ashdown Park, which is a country seat situate at the point of intersection of cross-roads in a forest.

“Linnaeus, Lord Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, derives his title from the castle of Clancharlie, but in 912 by Edward the Elder, as a defence against the Danes. Besides Hunkerville House, in London, which is a palace, he has Corleone Lodge at Windsor, which is another, and eight castlewards, one at Burton-on-Trent, with a royalty on the carriage of plaster of Paris; then Grumdaith Humble, Moricambe, Trewardraith, Hell-Kesters (where there is a miraculous well), Phillimore, with its turf bogs, Reculver, near the ancient city Vagniac, Vinecaunton, on the Moel-eulle Mountain; besides nineteen boroughs and village with reeves, and the whole of Penneth chase, all of which bring his lordship 40,000*l.* a year.

“The 172 peers enjoying their dignities under James II. possess among them altogether a revenue of 1,272,000*l.* sterling a year, which is the eleventh part of the revenue of England.”

In the margin, opposite the last name (that of Linnaeus, Lord Clancharlie), there was a note in the handwriting of Ursus: *Rebel; in exile; houses, lands, and chattels sequestrated. It is well.*

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#### IV.

Ursus admired Homo. One admires one's like. It is a law.

To be always raging inwardly and grumbling outwardly was the normal condition of Ursus. He was the malcontent of creation. By nature he was a man ever in opposition. He took the world unkindly; he gave his satisfecit to no one and to nothing. The bee did not atone, by his honey-making, for its sting; a full-blown rose did not absolve the sun for yellow fever and black vomit. It is



probable that in secret Ursus criticised Providence a good deal. "Evidently," he would say, "the devil works by a spring, and the wrong that God does is having let go the trigger." He approved of none but princes, and he had his own peculiar way of expressing his approbation. One day when James II. made a gift to the Virgin in a Catholic chapel in Ireland of a massive gold lamp, Ursus, passing that way with Homo, who was more indifferent to such things, broke out in admiration before the crowd, and exclaimed,—“It is certain that the blessed Virgin wants a lamp much more than those barefooted children there require shoes.”

Such proofs of his loyalty, and such evidences of his respect for established powers, probably contributed in no small degree to make the magistrates tolerate his vagabond life and his low alliance with a wolf. Sometimes of an evening, through the weakness of friendship, he allowed Homo to stretch his limbs and wander at liberty about the caravan. The wolf was incapable of an abuse of confidence, and behaved in society, that is to say among men, with the discretion of a poodle. All the same, if bad-tempered officials had to be dealt with, difficulties might have arisen; so Ursus kept the honest wolf chained up as much as possible.

From a political point of view his writing about gold, not very intelligible in itself, and now become undecipherable, was but a smear, and gave no handle to the enemy. Even after the time of James II., and under the “respectable” reign of William and Mary, his caravan might have been peacefully going its rounds of the little English country towns. He travelled freely from one end of Great Britain to the other, selling his philtres and phials, and sustaining with, the assistance of his wolf, his quack mummeries; and he passed with ease through the meshes of the nets which the police had spread all over England in order to sift wandering gangs, and especially to stop the progress of the Comprachicos.

This was right enough. Ursus belonged to no gang. Ursus lived with Ursus, a *tête-à-tête*, into which the wolf gently thrust his nose. If Ursus could have had his way, he would have been a Caribbee; that being impossible, he preferred to be alone. The solitary man is a modified savage, accepted by civilization. He who wanders most is most

alone; hence this continual change of place. To remain anywhere long, suffocated him with the sense of being tamed. He passed his life in passing on his way. The sight of towns increased his taste for brambles, thickets, thorns, and holes in the rock. His home was the forest. He did not feel himself much out of his element in the murmur of crowded streets, which is like enough to the bluster of trees. The crowd to some extent satisfies our taste for the desert. What he disliked in his van was its having a door and windows, and thus resembling a house. He would have realized his ideal, had he been able to put a cave on four wheels and travel in a den.

He did not smile, as we have already said, but he used to laugh; sometimes, indeed frequently, a bitter laugh. There is consent in a smile, while a laugh is often a refusal.

His great business was to hate the human race. He was implacable in that hate. Having made it clear that human life is a dreadful thing; having observed the superposition of evils, kings on the people, war on kings, the plague on war, famine on the plague, folly on everything, having proved a certain measure of chastisement in the mere fact of existence, having recognized that death is a deliverance, when they brought him a sick man he cured him; he had cordials and beverages to prolong the lives of the old. He put lame cripples on their legs again, and hurled this sarcasm at them, “There, you are on your paws once more, may you walk long in this valley of tears!” When he saw a poor man dying of hunger, he gave him all the pence he had about him, growling out, “Live on, you wretch! eat! last a long time! It is not I who would shorten your penal servitude.” After which, he would rub his hands and say, “I do men all the harm I can.”

Through the little window at the back, passers-by could read on the ceiling of the van these words, written within, but visible from without, inscribed with charcoal, in big letters: *URSUS, PHILOSOPHER.*

## ANOTHER PRELIMINARY CHAPTER.

### THE COMPRACHICOS.

#### I.

WHO now knows the word Comprachicos, and who knows its meaning?

The Comprachicos, or Comprapequeños,



were a hideous and nondescript association of wanderers, famous in the 17th century, forgotten in the 18th, unheard of in the 19th. The Comprachicos are like the "succession powder," an ancient social characteristic detail. They are part of old human ugliness. To the great eye of history, which sees everything collectively, the Comprachicos belong to the colossal fact of slavery. Joseph sold by his brethren is a chapter in their story. The Comprachicos have left their traces in the penal laws of Spain and England. You find here and there in the dark confusion of English laws the impress of this horrible truth, like the footprint of a savage in a forest.

Comprachicos, the same as Comprapequeños, is a compound Spanish word signifying Child-buyers.

The Comprachicos traded in children. They bought and sold them. They did not steal them. The kidnapping of children is another branch of industry. And what did they make of these children?

Monsters.

Why monsters?

To laugh at.

The populace must needs laugh; and kings too. The mountebank is wanted in the streets; the jester at the Louvre. The one is called a Clown, the other a Fool.

The efforts of man to procure himself pleasure are at times worthy of the attention of the philosopher.

What are we sketching in these few preliminary pages? A chapter in the most terrible of books; a book which might be entitled—*The Farming of the unhappy by the happy.*

## II.

A CHILD destined to be a plaything for men—such a thing has existed; such a thing exists even now. In simple and savage times such a thing constituted an especial trade. The 17th century, called the great century, was of those times. It was a century very Byzantine in tone. It combined corrupt simplicity with delicate ferocity; a curious variety of civilization. A tiger with a simper. Madame de Sevigné minces on the subject of the fagot and the wheel. That century traded a good deal in children. Flattering historians have concealed the sore, but have divulged the remedy, Vincent de Paul.

In order that a human toy should succeed,

he must be taken early. The dwarf must be fashioned when young. We play with childhood. But a well-formed child is not very amusing; a hunchback is better fun.

Hence grew an art. There were trainers who took a man and made him an abortion; they took a face and made a muzzle; they stunted growth; they kneaded the features. The artificial production of teratological cases had its rules. It was quite a science; what one can imagine as the antithesis of orthopedy. Where God had put a look, their art put a squint; where God had made harmony, they made discord; where God had made the perfect picture, they reestablished the sketch; and, in the eyes of connoisseurs, it was the sketch which was perfect. They debased animals as well; they invented piebald horses. Turenne rode a piebald horse. In our own days do they not dye dogs blue and green? Nature is our canvas. Man has always wished to add something to God's work. Man retouches creation, sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. The Court buffoon was nothing but an attempt to lead back man to the monkey. It was a progress the wrong way. A masterpiece in retrogression. At the same time they tried to make a man of the monkey. Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland and Countess of Southampton, had a marmoset for a page. Frances Sutton, Baroness Dudley, eighth peeress in the bench of barons, had tea served by a baboon clad in gold brocade, which her Ladyship called My Black. Catherine Sedley, Countess of Dorchester, used to go and take her seat in Parliament in a coach with armorial bearings, behind which stood, their muzzles stuck up in the air, three Cape monkeys in grand livery. A Duchess of Medina-Celi, whose toilette Cardinal Pole witnessed, had her stockings put on by an ourang-outang. These monkeys raised in the scale were a counterpoise to men brutalized and bestialized. This promiscuousness of man and beast, desired by the great, was especially prominent in the case of the dwarf and the dog. The dwarf never quitted the dog, which was always bigger than himself. The dog was the pair of the dwarf; it was as if they were coupled with a collar. This juxtaposition is authenticated by a mass of domestic records; notably by the portrait of Jeffrey Hudson, dwarf of Henrietta of France, daughter of Henri IV., and wife of Charles I.

To degrade man tends to deform him. The suppression of his state was completed by disfigurement. Certain vivisectioners of that period succeeded marvellously well in effacing from the human face the divine effigy. Doctor Conquest, member of the Amen-street College, and judicial visitor of the chemists' shops of London, wrote a book in Latin on this pseudo-surgery, the processes of which he describes. If we are to believe Justus of Carrickfergus, the inventor of this branch of surgery was a monk named Avonmore; an Irish word signifying Great River.

The dwarf of the Elector Palatine, Perkeo, whose effigy—or ghost—springs from a magical box in the cave of Heidelberg, was a remarkable specimen of this science, very varied in its applications. It fashioned beings the law of whose existence was hideously simple: it permitted them to suffer, and commanded them to amuse.

### III.

THE manufacture of monsters was practised on a large scale, and comprised various branches.

The Sultan required them, so did the Pope; the one to guard his women, the other to say his prayers. These were of a peculiar kind incapable of reproduction. Scarcely human beings, they were useful to voluptuousness and to religion. The seraglio and the Sistine Chapel utilized the same species of monsters; fierce in the former case, mild in the latter.

They knew how to produce things in those days, which are not produced now; they had talents which we lack, and it is not without reason that some good folk cry out that the decline has come. We no longer know how to sculpture living human flesh; this is consequent on the loss of the art of torture. Men were once virtuosi in that respect, but are so no longer; the art has become so simplified that it will soon disappear altogether. In cutting the limbs of living men, in opening their bellies and in dragging out their entrails phenomena were grasped on the moment and discoveries made. We are obliged to renounce these experiments now, and are thus deprived of the progress which surgery made by aid of the executioner.

The vivisection of former days was not limited to the manufacture of phenomena for the market place, of buffoons for the palace

(a species of augmentative of the courtier), and eunuchs for sultans and popes. It abounded in varieties. One of its triumphs was the manufacture of cocks for the king of England.

It was the custom, in the palace of the kings of England, to have a sort of watchman, who crowed like a cock. This watcher, awake while all others slept, ranged the palace, and raised from hour to hour the cry of the farmyard, repeating it as often as was necessary, and thus supplying a clock. This man, promoted to be cock, had in childhood undergone operation of the pharynx which was part of the art described by Dr. Conquest. Under Charles II. the salivation inseparable to the operation having disgusted the Duchess of Portsmouth, the appointment was indeed preserved, so that the splendor of the crown should not be tarnished, but they got an unmutiated man to represent the cock. A retired officer was generally selected for this honorable employment. Under James II. the functionary was named William Sampson, Cock, and received for his crow 9*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* annually.\*

\* M. Victor Hugo refers the reader to Chamberlayne's work on "The Present State of England," chapter xiii., where will be found "A List of His Majesties Household Officers and Servants attending in the several offices below stairs, under the command of his Grace James Duke of Ormond, Lord Steward, together with their respective salaries. From this list it may be enough to quote the last five entries.

*Sir Edward Villers*, Knight Marshall £26 00 00  
Six under Marshalls . . . . . 100 00 00  
*William Sampson*, Cock . . . . . 09 02 06  
Four Grooms Purveyors of Longcarts . 10 13 04  
*Henry Rainsforth*, Porter at St. James's 50 00 00"

And in case any one should imagine that *Cock* is a misprint for Cook, let it be observed that the officers of the king's kitchen are given in a different part of the same chapter, and that the wages of the meanest of the meanest of them was double what the gallant Cock obtained. Here is the list:—

*John Clement*, Esquire, 2nd Clerk £150 00 00  
*Claud Fourmont*, Esquire, 1st Master  
Cook . . . . . 150 00 00  
*Patrick Lambe*, Esquire, 2nd Master  
Cook . . . . . 80 00 00  
*Thomas Budding* Yeoman of the Mouth 50 00 00  
*Joseph Centlivre*, Yeoman Pottagier . 50 00 00  
*John Tompson*, Groom . . . . . 30 00 00  
*John Lincicombe*, Groom . . . . . 30 00 00  
*Alexander Housden*, Child . . . . . 25 00 00  
*James Beacher*, Child . . . . . 25 00 00  
One Scourer . . . . . 30 00 00  
Three Turnbroches . . . . . 54 5 00  
One Doorkeeper . . . . . 18 00 05"

TRANSLATOR.

The memoirs of Catharine II. inform us that at St. Petersburg, scarcely a hundred years since, whenever the czar or czarina was displeased with a Russian prince, he was forced to squat down in the great ante-chamber of the palace, and to remain in that posture a certain number of days, mewing like a cat, or clucking like a sitting hen, and pecking his food from the floor.

These fashions have passed away; but not so much, perhaps, as one might imagine. Now-a-days, courtiers slightly modify their intonation in clucking to please their masters. More than one picks up from the ground—we will not say from the mud—what he eats.

It is very fortunate that kings cannot err. Hence their contradictions never perplex us. In approving always, one is sure to be always right—which is pleasant. Louis XIV. would not have liked to see at Versailles either an officer acting the cock, or a prince acting the turkey. That which raised the royal and imperial dignity in England and Russia would have seemed to Louis the Great incompatible with the crown of St. Louis. We know what his displeasure was when Madame Henriette forgot herself so far as to see a hen in a dream—which was, indeed, a grave breach of good manners in a lady of the court. When one is of the court, one should not dream of the courtyard. Bossuet, it may be remembered, was nearly as scandalized as Louis XIV.

#### IV.

THE commerce in children in the 17th century, as we have explained, was connected with a trade. The Comprachicos engaged in the commerce, and carried on the trade. They bought children, worked a little on the raw material, and resold them afterwards.

The vendors were of all kinds; from the wretched father, getting rid of his family, to the master, utilizing his stud of slaves. The sale of men was a simple matter. In our own time we have had fighting to maintain this right. Remember that it is less than a century ago since the elector of Hesse sold his subjects to the King of England, who required men to be killed in America. Kings went to the Elector of Hesse as we go to the butcher to buy meat. The Elector had food for powder in stock, and hung up his subjects in his

shop. Come buy, it is for sale. In England, under Jefferies, after the tragical episode of Monmouth, there were many lords and gentlemen beheaded and quartered. Those who were executed left wives and daughters, widows and orphans, whom James II. gave to the queen, his wife. The queen sold these ladies to William Penn. Very likely the king had so much per cent. on the transaction. The extraordinary thing is, not that James II. should have sold the women, but that William Penn should have bought them. Penn's purchase is excused, or explained, by the fact that having a desert to sow with men, he needed women as farming implements.

Her Gracious Majesty made a good business out of these ladies. The young sold dear. We may imagine, with the uneasy feeling which a complicated scandal arouses, that probably some old duchesses were thrown in cheap.

The Comprachicos were also called the Cheylas, a Hindoo word, which conveys the image of harrying a nest.

For a long time the Comprachicos only partially concealed themselves. There is sometimes in the social order a favoring shadow thrown over iniquitous trades, in which they thrive. In our own day we have seen an association of the kind in Spain, under the direction of the ruffian Ramon Selles, last from 1834 to 1866, and hold three provinces under terror for thirty years—Valencia, Alicante, and Murcia.

Under the Stuarts, the Comprachicos were by no means in bad odor at court. On occasions they were used for reasons of state. For James II. they were almost an *instrumentum regni*. It was a time when families, which were refractory or in the way were dismembered; when a descent was cut short; when heirs were suddenly suppressed. At times one branch was defrauded to the profit of another. The Comprachicos had a genius for disfiguration which recommended them to state policy. To disfigure is better than to kill. There was, indeed, the Iron Mask, but that was a mighty measure. Europe could not be peopled with iron masks, while deformed tumblers ran about the streets without creating any surprise. Besides, the iron mask is removable; not so the mask of flesh. You are masked forever by your own flesh—what can be more ingenious? The Comprachicos worked on man as the Chinese

work on trees. They had their secrets, as we have said; they had tricks which are now lost arts. A sort of fantastic stunted thing left their hands; it was ridiculous and wonderful. They would touch up a little being with such skill that its father could not have known it. *Et que me reconnaîtait l'œil même de son père*, as Racine says in bad French. Sometimes they left the spine straight and remade the face. They unmarked a child as one might unmark a pocket-handkerchief. Products, destined for tumblers, had their joints dislocated in a masterly manner—you would have said they had been boned. Thus gymnasts were made.

Not only did the Comprachicos take away his face from the child, they also took away his memory. At least they took away all they could of it; the child had no consciousness of the mutilation to which he had been subjected. This frightful surgery left its traces on his countenance, but not on his mind. The most he could recall was that one day he had been seized by men, that next he had fallen asleep, and then that he had been cured. Cured of what? he did not know. Of burnings by sulphur and incisions by the iron he remembered nothing. The Comprachicos deadened the little patient by means of a stupefying powder which was thought to be magical, and suppressed all pain. This powder has been known from time immemorial in China, and is still employed there in the present day. The Chinese have been beforehand with us in all our inventions—printing, artillery, aërostation, chloroform. Only the discovery which in Europe at once takes life and birth, and becomes a prodigy and a wonder, remains a chrysalis in China, and is preserved in a deathlike state. China is a museum of embryos.

Since we are in China, let us remain there a moment to note a peculiarity. In China, from time immemorial, they have possessed a certain refinement of industry and art. It is the art of moulding a living man. They take a child, two or three years old, put him in a porcelain vase, more or less grotesque, which is made without top or bottom, to allow egress for the head and feet. During the day the vase is set upright, and at night is laid down to allow the child to sleep. Thus the child thickens without growing taller, filling up with his compressed flesh and dis-

torted bones the reliefs in the vase. This development in a bottle continues many years. After a certain time it becomes irreparable. When they consider that that is accomplished, and the monster made, they break the vase. The child comes out—and, behold, there is a man in the shape of a mug!

This is convenient; by ordering your dwarf betimes you are able to have it of any shape you wish.

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## V.

JAMES II. tolerated the Comprachicos for the good reason that he made use of them; at least it happened that he did so more than once. We do not always disdain to use what we despise. This low trade, an excellent expedient sometimes for the higher one which is called state policy, was willingly left in a miserable state, but was not persecuted. There was no surveillance, but a certain amount of attention. Thus much might be useful—the law closed one eye, the king opened the other.

Sometimes the king went so far as to avow his complicity. These are audacities of monarchical terrorism. The disfigured one was marked with the fleur-de-lys; they took from him the mark of God, they put on him the mark of the king. Jacob Astley, knight and baronet, lord of Melton Constable, in the county of Norfolk, had in his family a child who had been sold, and upon whose forehead the dealer had imprinted a fleur-de-lys with a hot iron. In certain cases in which it was held desirable to register for some reason the royal origin of the new position made for the child, they used such means. England has always done us the honor to utilize, for her personal service, the fleur-de-lys.

The Comprachicos, allowing for the shade which divides a trade from a fanaticism, were analogous to the Stranglers of India. They lived among themselves in gangs, and to facilitate their progress, affected somewhat of the Merry-Andrew. They encamped here and there, but they were grave and religious, bearing no affinity to other nomads, and incapable of theft. The people for a long time wrongly confounded them with the Moors of Spain and the Moors of China. The Moors of Spain were coiners, the Moors of China were thieves. There was nothing of the sort about the Comprachicos; they were honest

folk. Whatever you may think of them, they were sometimes sincerely scrupulous. They pushed open a door, entered, bargained for a child, paid, and departed. All was done with propriety.

They were of all countries. Under the name of Comprachicos fraternized English, French, Castilians, Germans, Italians. A unity of idea, a unity of superstition, the pursuit of the same calling, make such fusions. In this fraternity of vagabonds, those of the Mediterranean seaboard represented the East, those of the Atlantic seaboard the West. Many Basques conversed with many Irishmen. The Basque and the Irishman understand each other, they speak the old Punic jargon; add to this the intimate relations of Catholic Ireland with Catholic Spain—relations such that they terminated by bringing to the gallows in London one almost King of Ireland, the Celtic Lord de Brany; from which resulted the conquest of the country of Leitrim.

The Comprachicos were rather a fellowship than a tribe; rather a residuum than a fellowship. It was all the riff-raff of the universe; having for their trade a crime. It was a sort of harlequin people, all composed of rags. To recruit a man was to sew on a tatter.

To wander was the Comprachicos' law of existence—to appear and disappear. What is barely tolerated cannot take root. Even in the kingdoms where the business supplied the courts, and, on occasions, served as an auxiliary to the royal power, they were now and then suddenly ill-treated. Kings made use of their art, and sent the artists to the galleys. These inconsistencies belong to the ebb and flow of royal caprice. "For such is our pleasure."

A rolling stone and a rolling trade gather no moss. The Comprachicos were poor. They might have said what the lean and ragged witch observed, when she saw them setting fire to the stake, "*Le jeu n'en vaut pas la chandelle.*" It is possible, nay probable (their chiefs remaining unknown), that the wholesale contractors in the trade were rich. After the lapse of two centuries, it would be difficult to throw any light on this point.

It was, as we have said, a fellowship. It had its laws, its oaths, its formulæ—it had almost its cabala. Anyone now-a-days wishing to know all about the Comprachicos, need

only go into Biscaya or Galicia; there were many Basques among them, and it is in those mountains that one hears their history. To this day the Comprachicos are spoken of at Oyarzun, at Orbistondo, at Leso, at Astigarraga. *Aguardate niño, que voy a llamar al Comprachicos*,—Take care, child, or I'll call the Comprachicos,—is a cry with which mothers frighten their children in that country.

The Comprachicos, like the Zigeuner and the Gipsies, had appointed places for periodical meetings. From time to time their leaders conferred together. In the seventeenth century they had four principal points of rendezvous. One in Spain, the pass of Pancorbo; one in Germany, the glade called the wicked woman, near Diekirsch, where there are two enigmatic bas-reliefs, representing a woman with a head and a man without one; one in France, the hill where was the colossal statue of Massue-la-Promesse in the old sacred wood of Borvo Tomona, near Bourbonne les Bains; one in England, behind the garden wall of William Challoner, Squire of Gisborough in Cleveland, Yorkshire, behind the square tower and the great wing which is entered by an arched door.

## VI.

THE laws against vagabonds have always been very rigorous in England. England, in her Gothic legislation, seemed to be inspired with this principle, *Homo errans fera errante peior*. One of the special statutes classifies the man without a home as "more dangerous than the asp, dragon, lynx, or basilisk" (*atrocior aspidē, dracone, lynce, et basilico*). For a long time England troubled herself as much concerning the gipsies, of whom she wished to be rid, as about the wolves of which she had been cleared. In that the Englishman differed from the Irishman, who prayed to the saints for the health of the wolf, and called him my godfather.

English law, nevertheless, in the same way as (we have just seen) it tolerated the wolf, tamed, domesticated, and become in some sort a dog, tolerated the regular vagabond, become in some sort a subject. It did not trouble itself about either the mountebank or the travelling barber, or the quack doctor, or the pedlar, or the open-air scholar, as long as they had a trade to live by. Fur-

ther than this, and with these exceptions, the description of freedom which exists in the wanderer terrified the law. A tramp was a possible public enemy. That modern thing, the lounge, was then unknown; that ancient thing, the vagrant, was alone understood. A suspicious appearance, that indescribable something which all understand and none can define, was sufficient reason that society should take a man by the collar. "Where do you live? How do you get your living?" And if he could not answer, harsh penalties awaited him. Iron and fire were in the code: the law practised the cauterization of vagrancy.

Hence, throughout English territory, a veritable "*loi des suspects*" was applicable to vagrants (who it must be owned, readily became malefactors), and particularly to gypsies, whose expulsion has erroneously been compared to the expulsion of the Jews and the Moors from Spain, and the Protestants from France. As for us, we do not confound a battue with a persecution.

The Comprachicos, we insist, had nothing in common with the gypsies. The gypsies were a nation; the Comprachicos were a compound of all nations—the lees of a horrible vessel full of filthy waters. The Comprachicos had not, like the gypsies, an idiom of their own; their jargon was a promiscuous collection of idioms: all languages were mixed together in their language; they spoke a medley. Like the gypsies, they had come to be a people winding through the peoples; but their common tie was association, not race. At all epochs in history one finds in the vast liquid mass which constitutes humanity some of these streams of venomous men exuding poison around them. The gypsies were a tribe; the Comprachicos a freemasonry—a masonry having not a noble aim, but a hideous handicraft. Finally, their religions differ—the gypsies were Pagans, the Comprachicos were Christians, and more than that, good Christians, as became an association which, although a mixture of all nations, owed its birth to Spain, a devout land.

They were more than Christians, they were Catholics; they were more than Catholics, they were Romans, and so touchy in their faith, and so pure, that they refused to associate with the Hungarian nomads of the comitate of Pesth, commanded and led by an old man, having for sceptre a wand with a

silver ball, surmounted by the double-headed Austrian eagle. It is true that these Hungarians were schismatics, to the extent of celebrating the Assumption on the 29th August, which is an abomination.

In England, so long as the Stuarts reigned, the confederation of the Comprachicos was (for motives of which were have already given you a glimpse) to a certain extent protected. James II., a devout man, who persecuted the Jews and trampled out the gypsies, was a good prince to the Comprachicos. We have seen why. The Comprachicos were buyers of the human wares in which he was dealer. They excelled in disappearances. Disappearances are occasionally necessary for the good of the State. An inconvenient heir of tender age whom they took and handled lost his shape. This facilitated confiscation; the transfer of titles to favorites was simplified. The Comprachicos were, moreover, very discreet, and very taciturn. They bound themselves to silence and kept their word, which is necessary in affairs of state. There was scarcely an example of their having betrayed the secrets of the king. This was, it is true, for their interest; and if the king had lost confidence in them, they would have been in great danger. They were thus of use in a political point of view. Moreover these artists furnished singers for the Holy Father. The Comprachicos were useful for the *Misere* of Allegri. They were particularly devoted to Mary. All this pleased the papistry of the Stuarts. James II. could not be hostile to holy men who pushed their devotion to the Virgin to the extent of manufacturing eunuchs. In 1688 there was a change of dynasty in England. Orange supplanted Stuart. William III. replaced James II.

James II. went away to die in exile, miracles were performed on his tomb, and his relics cured the Bishop of Autun of fistula—a worthy recompense of the Christian virtues of the prince.

William, having neither the same ideas nor the same practices as James, was severe to the Comprachicos. He did his best to crush out the vermin.

A statute of the early part of William and Mary's reign hit the association of the child-buyers hard. It was as the blow of a club to the Comprachicos, who were from that time pulverized. By the terms of this statute those of the fellowship taken and duly con-

victed, were to be branded with a red-hot iron imprinting R. on the shoulder, signifying rogue; on the left hand T, signifying thief; and on the right hand M, signifying man-slayer. The chiefs, "supposed to be rich, although beggars in appearance," were to be punished in the *collistrigium*—that is, the pillory, and branded on the forehead with a P, besides having their goods confiscated, and the trees in their woods rooted up. Those who did not inform against the Comprachicos were to be punished by confiscation and imprisonment for life, as for the crime of misprison. As for the women found among these men, they were to suffer the cucking-stool—this is a tumbrel, the name of which composed of the French word  *coquine* , and the German  *stuhl* . English law being endowed with a strange longevity, this punishment still exists in English Legislation for quarrelsome women. The cucking-stool is suspended over a river or a pond, the women seated on it. The chair is allowed to drop into the water, and then pulled out. This dipping of the woman is repeated three times, "to cool her anger," says the commentator, Chamberlayne.

## BOOK THE FIRST.

### NIGHT NOT SO BLACK AS MAN.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### PORTLAND BILL.

AN obstinate north wind blew without ceasing over the mainland of Europe, and yet more roughly over England, during all the month of December, 1689, and all the month of January, 1690. Hence the disastrous cold weather, which caused the winter to be noted as "memorable to the poor," on the margin of the old Bible in the Presbyterian chapel of the Non-jurors in London. Thanks to the lasting qualities of the old monarchical parchment employed in official registers, long lists of poor persons, found dead of famine and cold, are still legible in many local repositories, particularly in the archives of the Liberty of the Clink, in the borough of Southwark, of Pie Powder Court (which signifies Dusty Feet Court), and in those of Whitechapel Court, held in the village of Stepney by the

bailiff of the Lord of the Manor. The Thames was frozen over—a thing which does not happen once in a century, as the ice forms on it with difficulty owing to the action of the sea. Coaches rolled over the frozen river, and a fair was held with booths, bear-baiting and bull-baiting. An ox was roasted whole on the ice. This thick ice lasted two months. The hard year, 1690, surpassed in severity even the famous winters at the beginning of the seventeenth century, so minutely observed by Dr. Gideon Delane, the same who was, in his quality of apothecary to King James, honored by the city of London, with a bust and a pedestal.

One evening, towards the close of one of the most bitter days of the month of January, 1690, something unusual was going on in one of the numerous inhospitable bights of the bay of Portland, which caused the sea-gulls and wild geese to scream and circle round its mouth, not daring to re-enter.

In this creek, the most dangerous of all which line the bay, during the continuance of certain winds, and consequently the most lonely,—convenient by reason of its very danger, for ships in hiding,—a little vessel, almost touching the cliff, so deep was the water, was moored to a point of rock. We are wrong in saying, The night falls; we should say the night rises, for it is from the earth that obscurity comes. It was already night at the bottom of the cliff: it was still day at top. Anyone approaching the vessel's moorings would have recognized a Biscayan hooker.

The sun, concealed all day by the mist, had just set. There was beginning to be felt that deep and sombrous melancholy which might be called anxiety for the absent sun. With no wind from the sea, the water of the creek was calm.

This was, especially in winter, a lucky exception. Almost all the Portland creeks have sand-bars; and in heavy weather the sea becomes very rough, and to pass in safety, much skill and practice are necessary. These little ports (ports more in appearance than fact) are of small advantage. They are hazardous to enter, fearful to leave. On this evening, for a wonder, there was no danger.

The Biscay hooker is of an ancient model, now fallen into disuse. This kind of hooker which has done service even in the navy, was stoutly built in its hull; a boat in size, a ship in strength. It figured in the Armada. Some-

times the war-hooker attained to a high tonnage; thus the Great Griffin, bearing a captain's flag, and commanded by Lopez de Medina, measured six hundred and fifty good tons, and carried forty guns. But the merchant and contraband hookers were very feeble specimens. Sea-folk held them at their true value, and esteemed the model a very sorry one. The rigging of the hooker was made of hemp, sometimes with wire inside, which was probably intended as a means, however unscientific, of obtaining indications in the case of magnetic tension. The lightness of this rigging did not exclude the use of heavy tackle, the cabrias of the Spanish galleon, and the cameli of the Roman triremes. The helm was very long, which gives the advantage of a long arm of leverage, but the disadvantage of a small arc of effort. Two wheels in two pulleys at the end of the rudder corrected this defect, and compensated, to some extent, for the loss of strength. The compass was well housed in a case perfectly square, and well-balanced by its two copper frames, placed horizontally, one in the other, on little bolts, as in Cardan's lamps. There was science and cunning in the construction of the hooker, but it was ignorant science and barbarous cunning. The hooker was primitive, just like the praam and the canoe; was kindred to the praam in stability and to the canoe in swiftness, and, like all vessels born of the instinct of the pirate and fisherman, it had remarkable sea qualities; it was equally well suited to land-locked and to open waters. Its system of sails, complicated in stays, and very peculiar, allowed of its navigating trimly in the close bays of Asturias (which are little more than enclosed basins, as Pasages for instance), and also freely out at sea. It could sail round a lake, and sail round the world—a strange craft with two objects, good for a pond, and good for a storm. The hooker is among vessels what the wagtail is among birds, one of the smallest and one of the boldest. The wagtail perching on a reed, scarcely bends it, and, flying away, crosses the ocean.

These Biscay hookers, even to the poorest, were gilt and painted. Tattooing is part of the genius of those charming people, savages to some degree. The sublime coloring of their mountains, variegated by snows and meadows, reveals to them the rugged spell which ornament possesses in itself. They are poverty-stricken and magnificent; they put

coats-of-arms on their cottages; they have huge asses, which they bedizen with bells, and huge oxen, on which they put head-dresses of feathers. Their coaches, which you can hear grinding the wheels two leagues off, are illuminated, carved, and hung with ribands. A cobbler has a bas-relief on his door; it is only St. Crispin, and an old shoe; but it is in stone. They trim their leathern jackets with lace. They do not mend their rags, but they embroider them. Vivacity profound and superb! The Basques are like the Greeks, children of the sun; while the Valencian draps himself, bare and sad, in his russet woollen-rug, with a hole to pass his head through, the natives of Galicia and Biscay have the delight of fine linen shirts, bleached in the dew. Their thresholds and their windows teem with faces fair and fresh, laughing under garlands of maize; a joyous and proud serenity shines out in their ingenious arts, in their trades, in their customs, in the dress of their maidens, in their songs. The mountain, that colossal ruin, is all aglow in Biscay: the sun's rays go in and out of every break. The wild Jaizquivel is full of Idylls. Biscay is Pyrenean grace as Savoy is Alpine grace. The dangerous bays,—the neighbors of St. Sebastian, Leso, and Fontarabia,—with storms, with clouds, with spray flying over the capes, with the rages of the waves and the winds, with terror, with uproar, mingle boat-women crowned with roses. He who has seen the Basque country wishes to see it again. It is the blessed land. Two harvests a year; villages resonant and gay; a stately poverty; all Sunday the sound of guitars, dancing, castanets, love-making; houses clean and bright; storks in the bell-fries.

Let us return to Portland—that rugged mountain in the sea.

The peninsula of Portland, looked at geometrically, presents the appearance of a bird's head, of which the bill is turned towards the ocean, the back of the head towards Weymouth; the isthmus is its neck.

Portland, greatly to the sacrifice of its wildness, exists now but for trade. The coasts of Portland were discovered by quarrymen and plasterers, towards the middle of the seventeenth century. Since that period what is called Roman cement has been made of the Portland stone—a useful industry, enriching the district, and disfiguring the bay.



Two hundred years ago these coasts were eaten away as a cliff; to-day, as a quarry. The pick bites meanly, the wave grandly; hence a diminution of beauty. To the magnificent ravages of the ocean have succeeded the measured strokes of men. These measured strokes have worked away the creek where the Biscay hooker was moored. To find any vestige of the little anchorage, now destroyed, the eastern side of the peninsular should be searched, towards the point beyond Folly Pier and Dirdle Pier, beyond Wakeham even, between the place called Church Hope and the place called Southwell.

The creek, walled in on all sides by precipices higher than its width, was minute by minute becoming more overshadowed by evening. The misty gloom, usual at twilight, became thicker; it was like a growth of darkness at the bottom of a well. The opening of the creek seaward, a narrow passage, traced on the almost night-black interior a pallid rift where the waves were moving. You must have been quite close to perceive the hooker moored to the rocks, and, as it were, hidden by the great cloaks of shadow. A plank thrown from on board on to a low and level projection of the cliff, the only point on which a landing could be made, placed the vessel in communication with the land. Dark figures were crossing and recrossing each other on this tottering gangway, and in the shadow some people were embarking.

It was less cold in the creek than out at sea, thanks to the screen of rock rising over the north of the basin, which did not, however, prevent the people from shivering. They were hurrying. The effect of the twilight defined the forms as though they had been punched out with a tool. Certain indentations in their clothes were visible, and showed that they belonged to the class called in England, *The ragged*.

The twisting of the pathway could be distinguished vaguely in the relief of the cliff. A girl who lets her stay-lace hang down trailing over the back of an arm-chair, describes, without being conscious of it, most of the paths of cliffs and mountains. The pathway of this creek, full of knots and angles, almost perpendicular, and better adapted for goats than men, terminated on the platform where the plank was placed. The pathways of cliffs ordinarily imply a not very inviting declivity; they offer themselves less as a road

than as a fall; they sink rather than incline. This one,—probably some ramification of a road on the plain above,—was disagreeable to look at, so vertical was it. From underneath you saw it gain by ziz-zag the higher layer of the cliff where it passed out through deep passages on to the high plateau by a cutting in the rock; and the passengers for whom the vessel was waiting in the creek must have come by this path.

Excepting the movement of embarkation which was being made in the creek, a movement visibly scared and uneasy, all around was solitude; no step, no noise, no breath was heard. At the other side of the roads, at the entrance of Ringstead Bay, you could just perceive a flotilla of shark-fishing boats, which were evidently out of their reckoning. These polar boats had been driven from Danish into English waters by the whims of the sea. Northerly winds play these tricks on fishermen. They had just taken refuge in the anchorage of Portland—a sign of bad weather expected and danger out at sea. They were engaged in casting anchor. The chief boat, placed in front after the old manner of Norwegian flotillas, all her rigging standing out in black, above the white level of the sea; and in front might be perceived the hook-iron, loaded with all kinds of hooks and harpoons, destined for the Greenland shark, the dogfish, and the spinous shark, as well as the nets to pick up the sun-fish.

Except a few other craft, all swept into the same corner, the eye met nothing living on the vast horizon of Portland. Not a house, not a ship. The coast in those days was not inhabited, and the roads, at that season, were not safe.

Whatever may have been the appearance of the weather, the beings who were going to sail away in the Biscayan *urca*, pressed on the hour of departure all the same. They formed a busy and confused group, in rapid movement on the shore. To distinguish one from another was difficult; impossible to tell whether they were old or young. The indistinctness of evening intermixed and blurred them; the mask of shadow was over their faces. They were sketches in the night. There were eight of them, and there were seemingly among them one or two women, hard to recognize under the rags and tatters in which the group was attired—clothes

which were no longer man's or woman's. Rags have no sex.

A smaller shadow, fitting to and fro among the larger ones, indicated either a dwarf or a child.

It was a child.

## CHAPTER II.

### LEFT ALONE.

THIS is what an observer close at hand might have noted.

All wore long cloaks, torn and patched, but covering them, and at need concealing them up to the eyes; useful alike against the north wind and curiosity. They moved with ease under these cloaks. The greater number wore a handkerchief rolled round the head, a sort of rudiment which marks the commencement of the turban in Spain. This head-dress was nothing unusual in England. At that time the South was in fashion in the North; perhaps this was connected with the fact that the North was beating the South. It conquered and admired. After the defeat of the Armada, Castilian was considered in the halls of Elizabeth to be elegant court talk. To speak English in the palace of the Queen of England was held almost an impropriety. Partially to adopt the manners of those upon whom we impose our laws is the habit of the conquering barbarian towards conquered civilization. The Tartar contemplates and imitates the Chinese. It was thus Castilian fashions penetrated into England; in return, English interests crept into Spain.

One of the men in the group embarking appeared to be a chief. He had sandals on his feet, and was bedizened with gold lace tatters and tinsel waistcoat, shining under his cloak like the belly of a fish. Another pulled down over his face a huge piece of felt, cut like a sombrero; this felt had no hole for a pipe, thus indicating the wearer to be a man of letters.

On the principle that a man's vest is a child's cloak, the child was wrapped over his rags in a sailor's jacket, which descended to his knees.

By his height you would have guessed him to be a boy of ten or eleven; his feet were bare.

The crew of the hooker was composed of a captain and two sailors.

The hooker had apparently come from

Spain, and was about to return thither. She was beyond a doubt engaged in a stealthy service from one coast to the other.

The persons embarking in her whispered among themselves.

The whispering interchanged by these creatures was of composite sound—now a word of Spanish, then of German, then of French, then of Gaelic, at times of Basque. It was either a patois or a slang. They appeared to be of all nations, and yet of the same band.

The motley group appeared to be a company of comrades, perhaps a gang of accomplices.

The crew was probably of their brotherhood. Community of object was visible in the embarkation.

Had there been a little more light, and if you could have looked at them attentively, you might have perceived on these people rosaries and scapulars half-hidden under their rags; one of the semi-women mingling in the group had a rosary almost equal for the size of its beads to that of a dervish, and easy to recognise for an Irish one made at Llanymthefty, which is also called Llanandriffy.

You might also have observed, had it not been so dark, a figure of Our Lady and Child carved and gilt on the bow of the hooker. It was probably that of the Basque Notre Dame, a sort of Panagia of the old Cantabri. Under this image, which occupied the position of a figure-head, was a lantern, which at this moment was not lighted—an excess of caution which implied an extreme desire of concealment. This lantern was evidently for two purposes. When a-light, it burned before the Virgin, and at the same time illumined the sea, a beacon doing duty as a taper.

Under the bowsprit the cut-water, long, curved, and sharpened, came out in front like the horn of a crescent. At the top of the cut-water, and at the feet of the Virgin, a kneeling angel, with folded wings, leaned her back against the stem, and looked through a spyglass at the horizon. The angel was gilded like Our Lady. In the cut-water were holes and openings to let the waves pass through, which afforded an opportunity for gilding and arabesques.

Under the figure of the Virgin was written, in gilt capitals, the word *Matutina*—the name of the vessel, not to be read just now on account of the darkness.

Amid the confusion of departure there were thrown down in disorder, at the foot of the cliff, the goods which the voyagers were to take with them, and which, by means of a plank serving as a bridge across, were being passed rapidly from the shore to the boat. Bags of biscuit, a cask of stock fish, a case of portable soup, three barrels—one of fresh water, one of malt, one of tar—four or five bottles of ale, an old portmanteau buckled up by straps, trunks, boxes, a ball of tow for torches and signals. Such was the lading. These ragged people had valises, which seemed to indicate a roving life. Wandering rascals are obliged to own something; at times they would prefer to fly away like birds, but they cannot do so without abandoning the means of earning a livelihood. They of necessity possess boxes of tools and instruments of labor, whatever their errant trade may be. Those of whom we speak were dragging their baggage with them, often an encumbrance.

It could not have been easy to bring these movables to the bottom of the cliff. This, however, revealed the intention of a definite departure.

No time was lost; there was one continued passing to and fro from the shore to the vessel, and from the vessel to the shore; each one took his share of the work; one carried a bag, another a chest. Those amidst the promiscuous company who were possibly or probably women, worked like the rest. They overloaded the child.

It was doubtful if the child's father or mother were in the group; no sign of life was vouchsafed him. They made him work, nothing more. He appeared not a child in a family, but a slave in a tribe. He waited on every one, and no one spoke to him.

However, he made haste, and, like the others of this mysterious troop, he seemed to have but one thought—to embark as quickly as possible. Did he know why? probably not, he hurried mechanically because he saw the others hurry.

The hooker was decked. The stowing of the lading of the hole was quickly finished, and the moment put off arrived. The last case had been carried over the gangway, and nothing was left to embark but the men. The two objects among the group who seemed women were already on board; six, the child among them, were still on the low plat-

form of the cliff. A movement of departure was made in the vessel, the captain seized the helm, a sailor took up an ax to cut the hawser; to cut is an evidence of haste; when there is time it is unknotted.

"Andamos," said, in a low voice, he who appeared chief of the six, and who had the spangles on his tatters. The child rushed towards the plank in order to be first to pass. As he placed his foot on it, two of the men hurried by, at the risk of throwing him into the water, got in before him, and passed on; the fourth drove him back with his fist and followed the third; the fifth, who was the chief, bounded into rather than entered the vessel, and, as he jumped in, kicked back the plank, which fell into the sea, a stroke of the hatchet cut the moorings, the helm was put up; the vessel left the shore, and the child remained on land.

### CHAPTER III.

#### ALONE.

THE child remained motionless on the rock, with his eyes fixed; no calling out; no appeal. Though this was unexpected by him, he spoke not a word. The same silence reigned in the vessel. No cry from the child to the men—no farewell from the men to the child. There was on both sides a mute acceptance of the widening distance between them. It was like a separation of ghosts on the banks of the Styx. The child, as if nailed to the rock, which the high tide was beginning to bathe, watched the departing bark. It seemed as if he realized his position. What did he realize?—Darkness.

A moment later, the hooker gained the neck of the creek and entered it. Against the clear sky the masthead was visible, rising above the split blocks between which the strait wound as between two walls. The truck wandered to the summit of the rocks and appeared to run into them. Then it was seen no more—all was over—the bark had gained the sea.

The child watched its disappearance—he was astounded but dreamy. His stupefaction was complicated by a sense of the dark reality of existence. It seemed as if there were experience in this dawning being. Did he, perchance, already exercise judgment? Experience coming too early constructs, some-

times, in the obscure depths of a child's mind, some dangerous balance—we know not what—in which the poor little soul weighs God.

Feeling himself innocent, he yielded. There was no complaint—the irreproachable does not reproach.

His rough expulsion drew from him no sign—he suffered a sort of internal stiffening. The child did not bow under this sudden blow of fate, which seemed to put an end to his existence ere it had well begun; he received the thunderstroke standing.

It would have been evident to any one who could have seen his astonishment unmixed with dejection, that, in the group which abandoned him, there was nothing which loved him, nothing which he loved.

Brooding, he forgot the cold. Suddenly the wave wetted his feet—the tide was flowing; a gust passed through his hair—the north wind was rising. He shivered. There came over him, from head to foot, the shudder of awakening.

He cast his eyes about him.

He was alone.

Up to this day there had never existed for him any other men than those who were now in the hooker. Those men had just stolen away.

Let us add what seems a strange thing to state. Those men, the only ones he knew, were unknown to him.

He could not have said who they were. His childhood had been passed among them, without his having the consciousness of being of them. He was in juxtaposition to them, nothing more.

He had just been—forgotten—by them.

He had no money about him, no shoes to his feet, scarcely a garment to his body, not even a piece of bread in his pocket.

It was winter—it was night. It would be necessary to walk several leagues before a human habitation could be reached.

He did not know where he was.

He knew nothing, unless it was that those who had come with him to the brink of the sea had gone away without him.

He felt himself put outside the pale of life.

He felt that man failed him.

He was ten years old.

The child was in a desert, between depths where he saw the night rising, and the depths where he heard the waves murmur.

He stretched his little thin arms and yawned.

Then, suddenly, as one who makes up his mind, bold, and throwing off his numbness—with the agility of a squirrel—or perhaps of an acrobat—he turned his back on the creek, and set himself to climb up the cliff. He escalated the path, left it, returned to it, quick and venturous. He was hurrying landward, just as though he had a destination marked out; nevertheless he was going nowhere.

He hastened without an object—a fugitive before Fate.

To climb is the function of a man; to clamber is that of an animal—he did both. As the slopes of Portland face southward, there was scarcely any snow on the path; the intensity of cold had, however, frozen that snow into dust very troublesome to the walker. The child freed himself of it. His man's jacket, which was too big for him, complicated matters, and got in his way. Now and then on an overhanging crag or in a declivity he came upon a little ice, which caused him to slip down. Then, after hanging for some moments over the precipice, he would catch hold of a dry branch or projecting stone. Once he came on a vein of slate, which suddenly gave way under him, letting him down with it. Crumbling slate is treacherous. For some seconds the child slid like a tile on a roof; he rolled to the extreme end of the decline; a tuft of grass which he clutched at the right moment saved him. He was as mute in the sight of the abyss as he had been in sight of the men; he gathered himself up and re-ascended silently. The slope was steep; so he had to tack in ascending. The precipice grew in the darkness; the vertical rock had no ending. It receded before the child in the distance of its height. As the child ascended, so seemed the summit to ascend. While he clambered he looked up at the dark entablature placed like a barrier between heaven and him. At last he reached the top.

He jumped on the level ground, or rather landed, for he rose from the precipice.

Scarcely was he on the cliff when he began to shiver. He felt in his face that bite of the night, the north wind. The bitter northwester was blowing; he tightened his rough sailor's jacket about his chest.

It was a good coat, called in ship language

a sou'-wester, because that sort of stuff allows little of the south-westerly wind to penetrate.

The child, having gained the table-land, stopped, placed his feet firmly on the frozen ground and looked about him.

Behind him was the sea ; in front the land ; above, the sky—but a sky without stars ; an opaque mist masked the zenith.

On reaching the summit of the rocky wall he found himself turned towards the land, and looked at it attentively. It lay before him, as far as the sky-line, flat, frozen, and covered with snow. Some tufts of heather shivered the wind. No roads were visible. Nothing, not even a shepherd's cot. Here and there, pale, spiral vortices might be seen, which were whirls of fine snow, snatched from the ground by the wind and blown away. Successive undulations of ground become suddenly misty, rolled themselves into the horizon. The great dull plains were lost under the white fog. Deep silence. It spread like infinity, and was hushed as the tomb.

The child turned again towards the sea.

The sea, like the land, was white, the one with snow, the other with foam. There is nothing so melancholy as the light produced by this double whiteness.

Certain lights of night are very clearly cut in their hardness ; the sea was like steel, the cliff like ebony. From the height where the child was, the bay of Portland appeared almost like a geographical map, pale, in a semi-circle of hills. There was something dream-like in that nocturnal landscape—a wan disc belted by a dark crescent. The moon sometimes has a similar appearance. From cape to cape, along the whole coast, not a single spark indicating a hearth with a fire, not a lighted window, not an inhabited house was to be seen. As in heaven, so on earth, no light. Not a lamp below, not a star above. Here and there came sudden risings in the great expanse of waters in the gulf, as the wind disarranged and wrinkled the vast sheet. The hooker was still visible in the bay as she fled.

It was a black triangle gliding over the livid waters.

Far away the waste of waters stirred confusedly in the ominous clear-obscure of immensity. The *Matutina* was making quick-way. She seemed to grow smaller every minute. Nothing appears so rapid as the

flight of a vessel melting into the distance of ocean.

Suddenly she lit the lantern at her prow. Probably the darkness falling round her made those on board uneasy, and the pilot thought it necessary to throw light on the waves. This luminous point, a spark seen from afar, clung like a corpse light to the high and long black form, You would have said it was a shroud raised up and moving in the middle of the sea, under which some one wandered with a star in his hand.

A storm threatened in the air ; the child took no account of it, but a sailor would have trembled. It was that moment of preliminary anxiety, when it seems as though the elements are changing into persons, and one is about to witness the mysterious transfiguration of the wind into the wind-god. The sea becomes Ocean : its power reveals itself as Will : that which one takes for a thing is a soul. It will become visible. Hence the terror. The soul of man fears to be thus confronted with the soul of nature.

Chaos was about to appear. The wind rolling back the fog, and making a stage of the clouds behind, set the scene for that fearful drama of wave and winter, which is called a Snow-storm. Vessels putting back hove in sight. For some minutes past the roads had no longer been deserted. Every instant troubled barks hastening towards an anchorage appeared from behind the capes ; some were doubling Portland Bill, the others St. Alban's head. From afar ships were running in. It was a race for refuge. Southwards the darkness thickened, and clouds, full of night, bordered on the sea. The weight of the tempest hanging overhead made a dreary lull on the waves. It certainly was no time to sail. Yet the hooker had sailed.

She had made the south of the cape. She was already out of the gulf, and in the open sea. Suddenly there came a gust of wind.

The *Matutina*, which was still clearly in sight, made all sail, as if resolved to profit by the hurricane. It was the nor'-wester, a wind sullen and angry. Its weight was felt instantly. The hooker, caught broadside on, staggered, but recovering held her course to sea. This indicated a flight rather than a voyage, less fear of sea than of land, and greater heed of pursuit from man than from wind.

The hooker, passing through every degree of diminution, sank into the horizon. The little star which she carried into shadow paled. More and more the hooker became amalgamated with the night, then disappeared.

This time for good and all.

At least the child seemed to understand it so; he ceased to look at the sea. His eyes turned back upon the plains, the wastes, the hills, towards the space where it might not be impossible to meet something living.

Into this unknown he set out.

## CHAPTER IV.

### QUESTIONS.

WHAT kind of band was it which had left the child behind in its flight?

Were those fugitives Comprachicos?

We have already seen the account of the measures taken by William III., and passed by Parliament against the malefactors, male and female, called Comprachicos, otherwise Comprapequeños, otherwise Cheylas.

There are laws which disperse. The law acting against the Comprachicos determined, not only the Comprachicos, but vagabonds of all sorts, on a general flight.

It was the devil take the hindmost. The greater number of the Comprachicos returned to Spain; many of them, as we have said, being Basques.

The law for the protection of children had at first this strange result: it caused many children to be abandoned.

The immediate effect of the penal statute was to produce a crowd of children, found or rather lost. Nothing is easier to understand. Every wandering gang containing a child was liable to suspicion. The mere fact of the child's presence was in itself a denunciation.

"They are very likely Comprachicos." Such was the first idea of the sheriff, of the bailiff, of the constable. Hence arrest and inquiry. People simply unfortunate, reduced to wander and to beg, were seized with a terror of being taken for Comprachicos although they were nothing of the kind. But the weak have grave misgivings of possible errors in justice. Besides, these vagabond families are very easily scared. The accusation against the Comprachicos was that they traded in other people's children. But the promiscuousness caused by poverty and indi-

gence is such that at times it might have been difficult for a father and mother to prove a child their own.

How came you by this child? how were they to prove that they held it from God? The child became a peril—they got rid of it. To fly unencumbered was easier; the parents resolved to lose it—now in a wood, now on a strand, now down a well.

Children were found drowned in cisterns.

Let us add that, in imitation of England, all Europe henceforth hunted down the Comprachicos. The impulse of pursuit was given. There is nothing like belling the cat. From this time forward the desire to seize them made rivalry and emulation among the police of all countries, and the alguazil was not less keenly watchful than the constable.

One could still read, twenty-three years ago, on a stone of the gate of Otero, an untranslatable inscription—the words of the code outraging propriety. In it, however, the shade of difference which existed between the buyers and the stealers of children is very strongly marked. Here is part of the inscription in somewhat rough Castilian, *Aquí quedan las orejas de los Comprachicos, y las bolsas de los robaniños, mientras que se van ellos al trabajo de mar.* You see the confiscation of ears, etc., did not prevent the owners going to the galleys. Whence followed a general rout among all vagabonds. They started frightened, they arrived trembling. On every shore in Europe their furtive advent was watched. Impossible for such a band to embark with a child, since to disembark with one was dangerous.

To lose the child was much simpler of accomplishment.

And this child, of whom we have caught a glimpse in the shadow of the solitudes of Portland, by whom had he been cast away?

To all appearance by Comprachicos.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TREE OF HUMAN INVENTION.

—It might be about seven o'clock in the evening. The wind was now diminishing, a sign, however, of a violent recurrence impending. The child was on the tableland at the extreme south point of Portland.

Portland is a peninsula; but the child did not know what a peninsula is, and was igno-

rant even of the name of Portland. He knew but one thing, which is, that one can walk until one drops down. An idea is a guide; he had no idea. They had brought him there, and left him there. *They and there.* These two enigmas represented his doom. *They*, were humankind. *There*, was the universe. For him in all creation there was absolutely no other basis to rest on but the little piece of ground where he placed his heel, ground hard and cold to his naked feet. In the great twilight world, open on all sides, what was there for the child? Nothing.

He walked towards this Nothing. Around him was the vastness of human desertion.

He crossed the first plateau diagonally, then a second, then a third. At the extremity of each plateau the child came upon a break in the ground. The slope was sometimes steep, but always short; the high, bare plains of Portland resemble great flagstones overlapping each other. The south side seems to enter under the protruding slab, the north side rises over the next one; these made ascents, which the child stepped over nimbly. From time to time he stopped, and seemed to hold counsel with himself. The night was becoming very dark. His radius of sight was contracting. He now only saw a few steps before him.

All of a sudden he stopped, listened for an instant, and with an almost imperceptible nod of satisfaction, turned quickly and directed his steps towards an eminence of moderate height, which he dimly perceived on his right, at the point of the plain nearest the cliff. There was on the eminence a shape which in the mist looked like a tree. The child had just heard a noise in this direction, which was the noise neither of the wind nor of the sea, nor was it the cry of animals. He thought that some one was there, and in a few strides he was at the foot of the hillock.

In truth, some one was there.

That which had been indistinct on the top of the eminence was now visible. It was something like a great arm thrust straight out of the ground; at the upper extremity of the arm a sort of fore-finger, supported from beneath by the thumb, pointed out horizontally; the arm, the thumb, and the forefinger drew a square against the sky. At the point of juncture of this peculiar finger and this peculiar thumb, there was a line, from which

hung something black and shapeless. The line moving in the wind sounded like a chain. This was the noise the child had heard. Seen closely, the line was that which the noise indicated, a chain—a single chain cable.

By that mysterious law of amalgamation which throughout nature causes appearances to exaggerate realities, the place, the hour, the mist, the mournful sea, the cloudy turmoils on the distant horizon, added to the effect of this figure, and made it seem enormous.

The mass linked to the chain presented the appearance of a scabbard. It was swaddled like a child, and long like a man. There was a round thing at its summit, about which the end of the chain was rolled. The scabbard was riven asunder at the lower end, and shreds of flesh hung out between the rents.

A feeble breeze stirred the chain, and that which hung to it swayed gently. The passive mass obeyed the vague motions of space. It was an object to inspire indescribable dread. Horror, which disproportions everything, blurred its dimensions while retaining its shape. It was a condensation of darkness, which had a defined form. Night was above and within the spectre; it was a prey of ghastly exaggeration. Twilight and moonrise, stars setting behind the cliff, floating things in space, the clouds, winds from all quarters, had ended by penetrating into the composition of this visible nothing. The species of log hanging in the wind partook of the impersonality diffused far over sea and sky, and the darkness completed this phase of the *thing* which had once been a man.

It was that which is no longer.

To be nought but a remainder! Such a thing is beyond the power of language to express. To exist no more, yet to persist; to be in the abyss, yet out of it; to reappear above death as if indissoluble. There is a certain amount of impossibility mixed with such reality. Thence comes the inexpressible. This being—was it a being? This black witness was a remainder, and an awful remainder—a remainder of what? Of nature first, and then of society. Nought, and yet total.

• The lawless inclemency of the weather held it at its will; the deep oblivion of solitude environed it; it was given up to unknown chances; it was without defence against the darkness, which did with it what

it willed. It was for ever the patient; it submitted; the hurricane (that ghastly conflict of winds) was upon it.

The spectre was given over to pillage. It underwent the horrible outrage of rotting in the open air; it was an outlaw of the tomb, There was no peace for it even in annihilation: in the summer it fell away into dust, in the winter into mud. Death should be veiled, the grave should have its reserve. Here was neither veil nor reserve: but cynically avowed putrefaction. It is effrontery in death to display its work, it offends all the calmness of shadow when it does its task outside its laboratory, the grave.

This dead being had been stripped. To strip one already stripped—relentless act! His marrow was no longer in his bones; his entrails were no longer in his body; his voice was no longer in his throat! A corpse is a pocket which death turned inside out and empties. If he ever had a Me, where was the Me? There still, perchance, and this was fearful to think of. Something wandering about something in chains,—can one imagine a more mournful lineament in the darkness?

Realities exist here below which serve as issues to the unknown, which seem to facilitate the egress of speculation, and at which hypothesis snatches. Conjecture has its *campelle intrare*. In passing by certain places and before certain objects one cannot help stopping—a prey to dreams into the realms of which the mind enters. In the invisible there are dark portals ajar. No one could have met this dead man without meditating.

In the vastness of dispersion he was wearing silently away. He had had blood which had been drunk, skin which had been eaten, flesh which had been stolen. Nothing had passed him by without taking somewhat from him. December had borrowed cold of him; midnight, horror; the iron, rust; the plague, miasma; the flowers perfume. His slow disintegration was a toll paid to all—a toll of the corpse to the storm, to the rain to the dew, to the reptiles, to the birds. All the dark hands of night had rifled the dead.

He was, indeed, an inexpressibly strange tenant, a tenant of the darkness. He was on a plain and on a hill, and *he was not*. He was palpable, yet vanished. He was a shadow accruing to the night. After the disappearance of day into the east of silent obscurity,

he became in lugubrious accord with all around him. By his mere presence he increased the gloom of the tempest, and the calm of stars. The unutterable which is in the desert was condensed in him. Waif of an unknown fate, he commingled with all the wild secrets of the night. There was in his mystery a vague reverberation of all enigmas.

About him life seemed sinking to its lowest depths. Certainty and confidence appeared to diminish in his environs. The shiver of the brushwood and the grass, a desolate melancholy, an anxiety in which a conscience seemed to lurk, appropriated with tragic force the whole landscape to that black figure suspended by the chain. The presence of a spectre in the horizon is an aggravation of solitude.

He was a Sign. Having unappeasable winds around him, he was implacable. Perpetual shuddering made him terrible. Fearful to say, he seemed to be a centre in space, with something immense leaning on him. Who can tell? Perhaps that equity, half seen and set at defiance, which transcends human justice. There was in his unburied continuance the vengeance of men and his own vengeance. He was a testimony in the twilight and the waste. He was in himself a disquieting substance, since we tremble before the substance which is the ruined habitation of the soul. For dead matter to trouble us, it must once have been tenanted by spirit. He denounced the law of earth to the law of heaven. Placed there by man, he there awaited God. Above him floated, blended with all the vague distortions of the cloud and the wave, boundless dreams of shadow.

Who could tell what sinister mysteries lurked behind this phantom? The illimitable circumscribed by nought, nor tree, nor roof, nor passer-by, was around the dead man. When the unchangeable broods over us, when heaven, the abyss, the life, grave and eternity appear patent, then it is we feel that all is inaccessible, all is forbidden, all is sealed. When infinity opens to us, terrible indeed is the closing of the gate behind.

## CHAPTER VI.

### STRUGGLE BETWEEN DEATH AND NIGHT.

THE child was before this thing, dumb, wondering, and with eyes fixed.



To a man it would have been a gibbet; to the child it was an apparition.

Where a man would have seen a corpse the child saw a spectre.

Besides, he did not understand.

The attractions of the obscure are manifold. There was one on the summit of that hill. The child took a step, then another; he ascended, wishing all the while to descend; and approached, wishing all the while to retreat.

Bold, yet trembling, he went close up to survey the spectre.

When he got close under the gibbet, he looked up and examined it.

The spectre was tarred; here and there it shone. The child distinguished the face. It was coated over with pitch; and this mask, which appeared viscous and sticky, varied its aspect with the night shadows. The child saw the mouth, which was a hole; the nose, which was a hole; the eyes, which were holes. The body was wrapped, and apparently corded up, in coarse canvas, soaked in naphtha. The canvas was mouldy and torn. A knee protruded through it. A rent disclosed the ribs; partly corpse, partly skeleton. The face was the color of earth; slugs wandering over it, had traced across it vague ribands of silver. The canvas, glued to the bones, showed in reliefs like the robe of a statue. The skull cracked and fractured, gaped like a rotten fruit. The teeth were still human, for they retained a laugh. The remains of a cry seemed to murmur in the open mouth. There were a few hairs of beard on the cheek. The inclined head had an air of attention.

Some repairs had recently been done; the face had been tarred afresh, as well as the ribs and the knee which protruded from the canvas. The feet hung out below.

Just underneath, in the grass, were two shoes, which snow and rain had rendered shapeless. These shoes had fallen from the dead man.

The barefooted child looked at the shoes.

The wind which had become more and more restless, was now and then interrupted by those pauses which foretell the approach of a storm. For the last few minutes he had altogether ceased to blow. The corpse no longer stirred; the chain was as motionless as a plumb line.

Like all new-comers into life, and taking into account the peculiar influences of his

fate, the child no doubt felt within him that awakening of ideas characteristic of early years, which endeavors to open the brain and which resembles the pecking of the young bird in the egg. But all that there was in his little consciousness just then was resolved into stupor. Excess of sensation has the effect of too much oil, and ends by putting out thought. A man would have put himself questions; the child put himself none; he only looked.

The tar gave the face a wet appearance; drops of pitch, congealed in what had once been the eyes, produced the effect of tears. However, thanks to the pitch, the ravage of death, if not annulled, was visibly slackened and reduced to the least possible decay. That which was before the child was a thing of which care was taken; the man was evidently precious. They had not cared to keep him alive, but they cared to keep him dead.

The gibbet was old, worm-eaten, although strong, and had been in use many years.

It was an immemorial custom in England to tar smugglers. They were hanged on the sea-board, coated over with pitch and left swinging. Examples must be made in public, and tarred examples last longest. The tar was mercy; by renewing it they were spared making too many fresh examples. They placed gibbets from point to point along the coast, as nowadays they do beacons. The hanged man did duty as a lantern. After his fashion, he guided his comrades, the smugglers. The smugglers from far out at sea perceived the gibbets. There is one, first warning; another, second warning. It did not stop smuggling; but public order is made up of such things. The fashion lasted in England up to the beginning of this century. In 1822 three men were still to be seen hanging in front of Dover Castle. But, for that matter, the preserving process was employed not only with smugglers. England turned robbers, incendiaries and murderers to the same account. Jack Painter, who set fire to the government storerooms at Portsmouth, was hanged and tarred in 1776. L'Abbé Coyer, who describes him as Jean le Peintre, saw him again in 1777; Jack Painter was hanging above the ruin he had made, and was re-tarred from time to time. His corpse lasted—I had almost said lived—nearly fourteen years. It was still doing good service in 1788; in 1790, however, they

were obliged to replace it by another. The Egyptians used to value the mummy of the king; a plebeian mummy can also, it appears, be of service.

The wind having great power on the hill, had swept it of all its snow. Herbage reappeared on it, interspersed here and there with a few thistles; the hill was covered by that close short grass which grows by the sea, and causes the tops of cliffs to resemble green cloth. Under the gibbet, on the very spot over which hung the feet of the executed criminal, was a long and thick tuft, uncommon on such poor soil. Corpses, crumbling there for centuries past, accounted for the beauty of the grass. Earth feeds on man.

A dreary fascination held the child; he remained there open-mouthed. He only dropped his head a moment when a nettle which felt like an insect, stung his leg; then he looked up again—he looked above him at the face which looked down on him. It appeared to regard him the more steadfastly because it had no eyes. It was a comprehensive glance, having an indescribable fixedness in which there was both light and darkness, and which emanated from the skull and teeth, as well as the empty arches of the brow. The whole head of a dead man seems to have vision, and this is awful. No eyeball, yet we feel that we are looked at. A horror of worms.

Little by little the child himself was becoming an object of terror. He no longer moved. Torpor was coming over him. He did not perceive that he was losing consciousness—he was becoming benumbed and lifeless. Winter was silently delivering him over to night. There is something of the traitor in winter. The child was all but a statue. The coldness of stone was penetrating his bones; darkness, that reptile, was crawling over him. The drowsiness resulting from snow creeps over a man like a dim tide. The child was being slowly invaded by a stagnation resembling that of the corpse. He was falling asleep.

On the hand of sleep is the finger of death. The child felt himself seized by that hand. He was on the point of falling under the gibbet. He no longer knew whether he was standing upright.

The end always impending, no transition between to be and not to be, the return into

the crucible, the slip possible every minute. Such is the precipice which is Creation.

Another instant, the child and the dead, life in sketch and life in ruin, would be confounded in the same obliteration.

The spectre appeared to understand, and not to wish it. Of a sudden it stirred. One would have said it was warning the child. It was the wind beginning to blow again. Nothing stranger than this dead man in movement.

The corpse at the end of the chain, pushed by the invisible gust, took an oblique attitude; rose to the left, then fell back, reascended to the right, and fell and rose with slow and mournful precision. A weird game of see-saw. It seemed as though one saw in the darkness the pendulum of the clock of Eternity.

This continued for some time. The child felt himself waking up at the sight of the dead; through his increasing numbness he experienced a distinct sense of fear.

The chain at every oscillation made a grinding sound, with hideous regularity. It appeared to take breath, and then to resume. This grinding was like the cry of a grasshopper.

An approaching squall is heralded by sudden gusts of wind. All at once the breeze increased into a gale. The corpse emphasized its dismal oscillations. It no longer swung, it tossed; the chain, which had been grinding, now shrieked. It appeared that its shriek was heard. If it was an appeal, it was obeyed. From the depths of the horizon came the sound of a rushing noise.

It was the noise of wings.

An incident occurred, a stormy incident, peculiar to graveyards and solitudes. It was the arrival of a flight of ravens. Black flying specks pricked the clouds, pierced through the mist, increased in size, came near, amalgamated, thickened, hastening towards the hill, uttering cries. It was like the approach of a Legion. The winged vermin of the darkness alighted on the gibbet; the child, scared, drew back.

Swarms obey words of command; the birds crowded on the gibbet, not one was on the corpse. They were talking among themselves.

The croaking was frightful. The howl, the whistle and the roar, are signs of life; the croak is a satisfied acceptance of putrefaction. In it you can fancy you hear the

tomb breaking silence. The croak is night-like in itself.

The child was frozen even more by terror than by cold.

Then the ravens held silence. One of them perched on the skeleton. This was a signal: they all precipitated themselves upon it. There was a cloud of wings, then all their feathers closed up, and the hanged man disappeared under a swarm of black blisters struggling in the obscurity. Just then the corpse moved. Was it the corpse? Was it the wind? It made a frightful bound. The hurricane, which was increasing came to its aid. The phantom fell into convulsions. The squall already blowing with full lungs, laid hold of it, and moved it about in all directions.

It became horrible; it began to struggle. An awful puppet, with a gibbet chain for a string. Some humorist of night must have seized the string, and been playing with the mummy. It turned and leaped as if it would fain dislocate itself; the birds frightened, flew off. It was like an explosion of all those unclean creatures. Then they returned; and a struggle began.

The dead man seemed possessed with hideous vitality. The winds raised him as though they meant to carry him away. He seemed struggling and making efforts to escape, but his iron collar held him back. The birds adapted themselves to all his movements, retreating, then striking again, scared but desperate. On one side a strange flight was attempted, on the other the pursuit of a chained man. The corpse, impelled by every spasm of the wind, had shocks, starts, fits of rage: it went, it came, it rose, it fell, driving back the scattered swarm. The dead man was a club, the swarms were dust. The fierce, assailing flock would not leave their hold, and grew stubborn; the man, as if maddened by the cluster of beaks, redoubled his blind chastisement of space. It was like the blows of a stone held in a sling. At times the corpse was covered by talons and wings; then it was free. There were disappearances of the horde: then sudden furious returns. A frightful torment continuing after life was past. The birds seemed frenzied. The air-holes of hell must surely give passage to such swarms. Thrusting of claws, thrusting of beaks, croakings, rendings of shreds no longer flesh, creakings of the gibbet, shudderings of the skele-

ton, jingling of the chain, the voices of the storm and tumult. What conflict more fearful? A hobgoblin warring with devils! A combat with a spectre!

At times the storm redoubling its violence, the hanged man revolved on his own pivot, turning every way at once towards the swarm, as if he wished to run after the birds; his teeth seemed to try and bite them. The wind was for him, the chain against him. It was as if black deities were mixing themselves up in the fray. The hurricane was in the battle. As the dead man turned himself about, the flock of birds wound round him spirally. It was a whirl in a whirlwind. A great roar was heard from below. It was the sea.

The child saw this nightmare. Suddenly he trembled in all his limbs; a shiver thrilled his frame; he staggered, tottered, nearly fell, recovered himself, pressed both hands to his forehead, as if he felt his forehead a support; then, haggard, his hair streaming in the wind, descending the hill with long strides, his eyes closed, himself almost a phantom, he took flight, leaving behind that torment in the night.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE NORTH POINT OF PORTLAND.

HE ran until he was breathless, at random, desperate, over the plain into the snow, into space. His flight warmed him. He needed it. Without the run and the fright he had died.

When his breath failed him, he stopped, but he dared not look back. He fancied that the birds would pursue him, that the dead man had undone his chain and was perhaps hurrying behind him, and no doubt the gibbet itself was descending the hill, running after the dead man; he feared to see these things if he turned his head.

When he had somewhat recovered his breath, he resumed his flight.

To account for facts does not belong to childhood. He received impressions which were magnified by terror, but he did not link them together in his mind, nor form any conclusion on them. He was going on, no matter how or where; he ran in agony and difficulty as one in a dream. During the three hours or so since he had been deserted, his onward progress, still vague, had changed its purpose.

At first it was a search, now it was a flight. He no longer felt hunger nor cold—he felt fear. One instinct had given place to another. To escape was now his whole thought—to escape from what? From everything. On all sides life seemed to enclose him like a horrible wall. If he could have fled from all things, he would have done so. But children know nothing of that breaking from prison which is called suicide. He was running. He ran on for an indefinite time; but fear dies with lack of breath.

All at once, as if seized by a sudden accession of energy and intelligence, he stopped. One would have said he was ashamed of running away. He drew himself up, stamped his foot, and, with head erect, looked round. There was no longer hill, nor gibbet, nor flights of crows. The fog had resumed possession of the horizon. The child pursued his way: he now no longer ran but walked. To say that meeting with a corpse had made a man of him would be to limit the manifold and confused impression which possessed him. There was in his expression much more and much less. The gibbet, a mighty trouble in the rudiment of comprehension, nascent in his mind, still seemed to him an apparition; but a trouble overcome is strength gained, and he felt himself stronger. Had he been of an age to probe self, he would have detected within him a thousand other germs of meditation; but the reflection of children is shapeless, and the utmost they feel is the bitter aftertaste of that which, obscure to them, the man later on calls indignation. Let us add that a child has the faculty of quickly accepting the conclusion of a sensation; the distant fading boundaries which amplify painful subjects, escape him. A child is protected by the limit of feebleness against emotions which are too complex. He sees the fact, and little else beside. The difficulty of being satisfied by half-ideas does not exist for him. It is not until later that experience comes, with its brief, to conduct the lawsuit of life. Then he confronts groups of facts which have crossed his path—the understanding cultivated and enlarged, draws comparisons—the memories of youth reappear under the passions, like the traces of a palimpsest under the erasure; these memories form the bases of logic, and that which was a vision in the child's brain, becomes a syllogism in the man's. Experience is, however, various,

and turns to good or evil according to natural disposition. With the good it ripens, with the bad it rots.

The child had run quite a quarter of a league, and walked another quarter, when suddenly he felt the craving of hunger. A thought which altogether eclipsed the hideous apparition on the hill occurred to him forcibly, that he must eat. Happily there is in man a brute which serves to lead him back to reality.

But what to eat, where to eat, how to eat?

He felt his pockets mechanically, well knowing that they were empty. Then he quickened his steps, without knowing whither he was going. He hastened towards a possible shelter. This faith in an inn is one of the convictions enrooted by God in man. To believe in a shelter is to believe in God.

However, in that plain of snow there was nothing like a roof.

The child went on, and the waste continued bare as far as eye could see. There had never been a human habitation on the tableland. It was at the foot of the cliff, in holes in the rocks, that, lacking wood to build themselves huts had dwelt long ago the aboriginal inhabitants, who had slings for arms, dried cow-dung for firing, for a God the idol Heil standing in a glade at Dorchester, and for trade the fishing of that false gray coral which the Gauls called *plin*, and the Greeks *isidis plocamos*.

The child found his way as best he could. Destiny is made up of cross roads. An option of path is dangerous. This little being had an early choice of doubtful chances.

He continued to advance, but although the muscles of his thighs seemed to be of steel, he began to tire. There were no tracks in the plain, or if there were any, the snow had obliterated them. Instinctively he inclined eastwards. Sharp stones had wounded his heels. Had it been daylight pink stains made by his blood might have been seen in the footprints he left in the snow.

He recognized nothing. He was crossing the plain of Portland from south to north, and it is probable that the band with which he had come, to avoid meeting any one, had crossed it from east to west; they had most likely sailed in some fisherman's or smuggler's boat, from a point on the coast of Uggescombe, such as St. Catherine's Cape, or Swancry, to Portland to find the hooker

which awaited them, and they must have landed in one of the creeks of Weston, and re-embarked in one of those of Easton. That direction was intersected by the one the child was now following. It was impossible for him to recognize the road.

On the plain of Portland there are, here and there, raised strips of land, abruptly ended by the shore and cut perpendicular to the sea. The wandering child reached one of these culminating points and stopped on it, hoping that a larger space might reveal further indications. He tried to see around him. Before him in place of an horizon, was a vast livid opacity. He looked at this attentively, and under the fixedness of his glance it became less indistinct. At the base of a distant fold of land towards the east, in the depths of that opaque lividity (a moving and wan sort of precipice, which resembled a cliff of the night,) crept and floated some vague black rents, some dim shreds of vapor. The pale opacity was fog, the black shreds were smoke. Where there is smoke there are men. The child turned his steps in that direction.

He saw some distance off a descent, and at the foot of the descent, among shapeless conformations of rock, blurred by the mist, what seemed to be either a sandbank or a tongue of land, joining probably to the plains of the horizon the tableland he had just crossed. It was evident he must pass that way.

He had, in fact, arrived at the Isthmus of Portland, a diluvian alluvium which is called Chess Hill.

He began to descend the side of the plateau.

The descent was difficult and rough. It was (with less of ruggedness, however), the reverse of the ascent he had made on leaving the creek. Every ascent is balanced by a decline. After having clambered up, he crawled down.

He leaped from one rock to another at the risk of a sprain, at the risk of falling into the vague depths below. To save himself when he slipped on the rock or on the ice, he caught hold of handfuls of weeds and furze, thick with thorns, and their points ran into his fingers. At times he came on an easier declivity, taking breath as he descended; then came on the precipice again, and each step necessitated an expedient. In descending precipices, every movement solves a problem. One must be skilful under pain of death. These

problems the child solved with an instinct which would have made him the admiration of apes and mountebanks. The descent was steep and long. Nevertheless he was coming to the end of it.

Little by little it was drawing nearer the moment when he should land on the Isthmus, of which from time to time he caught a glimpse. At intervals, while he bounded or dropped from rock to rock, he pricked his ears, his head erect, like a listening deer. He was hearkening to a diffused and faint uproar, far away to the left, like the deep note of a clarion. It was a commotion of winds, preceding that fearful north blast which is heard rushing from the pole, like an inroad of trumpets. At the same time the child felt now and then on his brow, on his eyes, on his cheeks, something which was like the palms of cold hands being placed on his face. These were large frozen flakes, sown at first softly in space, then eddying, and heralding a snow-storm. The child was covered with them. The snow-storm, which for the last hour had been on the sea, was beginning to gain the land. It was slowly invading the plains. It was entering obliquely, by the north-west, the tableland of Portland.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

### *THE HOOKER AT SEA.*

#### CHAPTER I.

##### SUPERHUMAN LAWS.

THE snow-storm is one of the mysteries of the ocean. It is the most obscure of things meteorological; obscure in every sense of the word. It is a mixture of fog and storm; and even in our days we can not well account for the phenomenon. Hence many disasters.

We try to explain all things by the action of wind and wave; yet in the air there is a force which is not the wind, and in the waters a force which is not the wave. That force, both in the air and in the water, is effluvium. Air and water are too nearly identical liquid masses, entering into the composition of each other by condensation and dilatation, so that to breathe is to drink. Effluvium alone is fluid. The wind and the wave are only impulses; effluvium is a cur-

rent. The wind is visible in clouds, the wave is visible in foam; effluvium is invisible. From time to time, however, it says, "I am here." Its "I am here" is a clap of thunder.

The snow storm offers a problem analogous to the dry fog. If the solution of the callina of the Spaniards, and the quobar of the Ethiopians be possible, assuredly that solution will be achieved by attentive observation of magnetic affluvium.

Without effluvium a crowd of circumstances would remain enigmatic. Strictly speaking, the changes in the velocity of the wind, varying from 3 feet per second to 220 feet, would supply a reason for the variations of the waves rising from 3 inches in a calm sea to 36 feet in a raging one. Strictly speaking, the horizontal direction of the winds, even in a squall, enables us to understand how it is that a wave 30 feet high can be 1,500 feet long. But why are the waves of the Pacific four times higher near America than near Asia; that is to say, higher in the East than in the West? Why is the contrary true of the Atlantic? Why, under the Equator, are they highest in the middle of the sea? Wherefore these deviations in the swell of the ocean? This is what magnetic effluvium, combined with terrestrial rotation and sidereal attraction can alone explain.

Is not this mysterious complication needed to explain an oscillation of the wind veering, for instance, by the west from S.E. to N.E., then suddenly returning in the same great curve from N.E. to S.E., so as to make in thirty-six hours a prodigious circuit of 560 degrees? Such was the preface to the snow-storm of March 17, 1867.

The storm-waves of Australia reach a height of 80 feet; this fact is connected with the vicinity of the Pole. Storms in those latitudes result less from disorder of the winds than from submarine electrical discharges. In the year 1866 the transatlantic cable was disturbed at regular intervals in its working for two hours in the twenty-four, from noon to two o'clock, by a sort of intermittent fever. Certain compositions and decompositions of forces produce phenomena, and impose themselves on the calculations of the seaman under pain of shipwreck. The day that navigation, now a routine, shall become a mathematic, the day we shall, for instance, seek to know why it is that in our regions hot winds come sometimes from the

north, and cold winds from the south; the day we shall understand that diminutions of temperature are proportionate to oceanic depths; the day we realize that the globe is a vast loadstone polarized in immensity, with two axes—an axis of rotation, and an axis of effluvium, intersecting each other at the centre of the earth, and that the magnetic poles turn round the geographical poles; when those who risk life will choose to risk it scientifically; when men shall navigate assured from studied uncertainty; when the captain shall be a meteorologist; when the pilot shall be a chemist; then will many catastrophes be avoided. The sea is magnetic as much as aquatic: an ocean of unknown forces floats in the ocean of the waves, or, one might say, on the surface. Only to behold in the sea a mass of water is not to see it at all: the sea is an ebb and flow of fluid, as much as a flux and reflux of liquid. It is, perhaps, complicated by attractions even more than by hurricanes; molecular adhesion manifested among other phenomena by capillary attraction, although microscopic, takes in ocean its place in the grandeur of immensity; and the wave of effluvium sometimes aids, sometimes counteracts, the wave of the air and the wave of the waters. He who is ignorant of electric law is ignorant of hydraulic law; for the one intermixes with the other. It is true there is no study more difficult nor more obscure; it verges on empiricism, just as astronomy verges on astrology; and yet without this study there is no navigation. Having said this much we will pass on.

One of the most dangerous components of the sea is the snow-storm. The snow-storm is above all things magnetic. The pole produces it as it produces the aurora borealis. It is in the fog of the one as in the light of the other; and in the flake of snow as in the streak of flame, effluvium is visible.

Storms are the nervous attacks and delirious frenzies of the sea. The sea has its ailments. Tempests may be compared to maladies. Some are mortal, others not; some may be escaped, others not. The snow-storm is supposed to be generally mortal. Jaribija, one of the pilots of Magellan, termed it\* "a cloud issuing from the devil's sore side."

The old Spanish navigators called this kind of squall *la nevada*, when it came with

\* *Una nube salida del malo lado del diablo.*

snow; *la helada* when it came with hail. According to them, bats fell from the sky, with the snow.

Snow-storms are characteristic of polar latitudes; nevertheless, at times they glide—one might almost say tumble—into our climates; so much ruin is mingled with the chances of the air.

The *Matutina*, as we have seen, plunged resolutely into the great hazard of the night, a hazard increased by the impending storm. She had encountered its menace with a sort of tragic audacity; nevertheless, it must be remembered that she had received due warning.

## CHAPTER II.

### OUR FIRST ROUGH SKETCHES FILLED IN.

WHILE the Hooker was in the gulf of Portland, there was but little sea on; the ocean, if gloomy, was almost still, and the sky was yet clear. The wind took little effect on the vessel; the hooker hugged the cliff as closely as possible; it served as a screen to her.

There were ten on board the little Biscayan felucca, three men in crew and seven passengers, of whom two were women. In the light of the open sea (which broadens twilight into day) all the figures on board were clearly visible. Besides they were not hiding now, they were all at ease, each one reassured his freedom of manner, spoke in his own note, showed his face: departure was to them a deliverance.

The motley nature of the group shone out. The women were of no age. A wandering life produces premature old age, and indigence is made up of wrinkles. One of them was a Basque of the Dry-ports. The other, with the large rosary, was an Irishwoman. They wore that air of indifference common to the wretched. They had squatted down close to each other when they got on board, on chests at the foot of the mast. They talked to each other. Irish and Basque are, as we have said, kindred languages. The Basque woman's hair was scented with onions and basil. The skipper of the hooker was a Basque of Guipuzcoa. One sailor was a Basque of the northern slope of the Pyrenees, the other was of the southern slope,—that is to say, they were of the same nation, although the first was French and the latter

Spanish. The Basques recognize no official country. *Mi madre se llama Montaña*, my mother is called the mountain, as Zalareus, the muleteer, used to say. Of the five men who were with the two women, one was a Frenchman of Languedoc, one a Frenchman of Provence, one a Genoese; one an old man, he who wore the sombrero without a hole for a pipe, appeared to be a German. The fifth, the chief, was a Basque of the Landes from Biscarrosse. It was he who, just as the child was going on board the hooker, had, with a kick of his heel, cast the plank into the sea. This man, robust, agile, sudden in movement, covered, as may be remembered with trimmings, slashings, and glistening tinsel, could not keep in his place; he stooped down, rose up, and continually passed to and fro from one end of the vessel to the other, as if debating uneasily on what had been done and what was going to happen.

The chief of the band, the captain and the two men of the crew, all four Basques, spoke sometimes Basque, sometimes Spanish, sometimes French—these three languages being common on both slopes of the Pyrenees. But generally speaking, excepting the women, all talked something like French, which was the foundation of their slang. The French language about this period began to be chosen by the peoples as something intermediate between the excess of consonants in the north, and the excess of vowels in the south. In Europe, French was the language of commerce, and also of felony. It will be remembered that Gibby, a London thief, understood Cartouche.

The hooker, a fine sailer, was making quick way; still, ten persons, besides their baggage, were a heavy cargo for one of such light draught.

The fact of the vessel's aiding the escape of a band did not necessarily imply that the crew were accomplices. It was sufficient that the captain of the vessel was a Vascongado, and that the chief of the band was another. Among that race mutual assistance is a duty which admits of no exception. A Basque, as we have said, is neither Spanish nor French; he is a Basque, and always and everywhere he must succour a Basque. Such is Pyrenean fraternity.

All the time the hooker was in the gulf, the sky, although threatening, did not frown enough to cause the fugitives any uneasiness.

They were flying, they were escaping, they were brutally gay. One laughed, another sang; the laugh was dry but free, the song was low but careless.

The Languedocian cried, "*Caoucagno!*" "*Cocagne*" expresses the highest pitch of satisfaction in Narbonne. He was a long-shore sailor, a native of the waterside village of Gruissan, on the southern side of the Clappe, a bargeman rather than a mariner, but accustomed to work the reaches of the inlet of Bages, and to draw the drag-net full of fish over the salt sands of St. Lucie. He was of the race who wear a red cap, make complicated signs of the cross after the Spanish fashion, drink wine out of goat-skins, eat scraped ham, kneel down to blasphemy and implore their patron saint with threats:—"Great saint, grant me what I ask, or I'll throw a stone at thy head, *ou té feg un pic*." He might be, at need, a useful addition to the crew.

The Provençal in the caboose was blowing up a turf fire under an iron pot, and making broth. The broth was a kind of Puchero, in which fish took the place of meat, and into which the Provençal threw chick peas, little bits of bacon cut in squares, and pods of red pimento; concessions made by the eaters of *bouillabaisse* to the eaters of *olla podrida*. One of the bags of provisions was beside him unpacked. He had lighted over his head an iron lantern, glazed with talc, which swung on a hook from the ceiling. By its side, on another hook, swung the weather-cock halcyon. There was a popular belief in those days that a dead halcyon, hung by the beak, always turned its breast to the quarter whence the wind was blowing. While he made the broth, the Provençal put the neck of a gourd into his mouth, and now and then swallowed a draught of *aguardiente*. It was one of those gourds covered with wicker, broad and flat, with handles, which used to be hung to the side by a strap, and which were then called hip-gourds. Between each gulp he mumbled one of those country songs of which the subject is nothing at all: a hollow road, a hedge; you see in the meadow, through a gap in the bushes, the shadow of a horse and cart, elongated in the sunset, and from time to time, above the hedge, the end of a fork loaded with hay appears and disappears—you want no more to make a song.

A departure, according to the bent of one's mind, is a relief or a depression. All seemed lighter in spirits excepting the old man of the band, the man with the hat that had no pipe.

This old man, who looked more German than anything else, although he had one of those unfathomable faces in which nationality is lost, was bald, and so grave that his baldness might have been a tonsure. Every time he passed before the Virgin on the prow, he raised his felt hat, so that you could see the swollen and senile veins of his skull. A sort of full gown, torn and threadbare, of brown Dorchester serge, but half hid his closely fitting coat, tight, compact, and hooked up to the neck like a cassock. His hands inclined to cross each other, and had the mechanical junction of habitual prayer. He had what might be called a wan countenance; for the countenance is above all things a reflection, and it is an error to believe that idea is colorless. That countenance was evidently the surface of a strange inner state, the result of a composition of contradictions, some tending to drift away in good; others in evil, and to an observer it was the revelation of one who was less and more than human—capable of falling below the scale of the tiger, or of rising above that of man. Such chaotic souls exist. There was something inscrutable in that face. Its secret reached the abstract. You felt that the man had known the foretaste of evil which is the calculation, and the after-taste which is the zero. In his impassibility, which was perhaps only on the surface, were imprinted two petrifications; the petrification of the heart proper to the hangman, and the petrification of the mind proper to the mandarin. One might have said (for the monstrous has its mode of being complete,) that all things were possible to him, even emotion. In every savant there is something of the corpse, and this man was a savant. Only to see him you caught science imprinted in the gestures of his body and in the folds of his dress. His was a fossil face, the serious cast of which was counteracted by that wrinkled mobility of the polyglot which verges on grimace. But a severe man withal; nothing of the hypocrite, nothing of the cynic. A tragic dreamer. He was one of those whom crime leaves pensive; he had the brow of an incendiary tempered by the eyes



of an archbishop. His sparse grey locks turned to white over his temples. The Christian was evident in him, complicated with the fatalism of the Turk. Chalkstones deformed his fingers, dissected by leanness. The stiffness of his tall frame was grotesque. He had his sea-legs, he walked slowly about the deck, not looking at any one, with an air decided and sinister. His eyeballs were vaguely filled with the fixed light of a soul studious of the darkness and afflicted by reapparitions of conscience.

From time to time the chief of the band, abrupt and alert, and making sudden turns about the vessel, came to him and whispered in his ear. The old man answered by a nod. It might have been the lightning consulting the night.

### CHAPTER III.

#### TROUBLED MEN ON THE TROUBLED SEA.

Two men on board the craft were absorbed in thought—the old man, and the skipper of the hooker, who must not be mistaken for the chief of the band. The captain was occupied by the sea, the old man by the sky. The former did not lift his eyes from the waters; the latter kept watch on the firmament. The skipper's anxiety was the state of the sea; the old man seemed to suspect the heavens. He scanned the stars through every break in the clouds.

It was the time when day still lingers, but some few stars begin faintly to pierce the twilight. The horizon was singular. The mist upon it varied. Haze predominated on land, clouds at sea.

The skipper, noting the rising billows, hauled all taut before he got outside Portland Bay. He would not delay so doing, until he should pass the headland. He examined the rigging closely, and satisfied himself that the lower shrouds were well set up, and supported firmly the futtock-shrouds; precautions of a man who means to carry on with a press of sail, at all risks.

The hooker was not trimmed, being two foot by the head. This was her weak point.

The captain passed every minute from the binnacle to the standard compass, taking the bearings of objects on shore. The *Matutina* had at first a soldier's wind which was not unfavorable, though she could not lie with-

in five points of her course. The captain took the helm as often as possible, trusting to no one but himself to prevent her from dropping to the leeward, the effect of the rudder being influenced by the steerageway.

The difference between the true and apparent course, being relative to the way on the vessel, the hooker seemed to lie closer to the wind than she did in reality. The breeze was not a-beam, nor was the hooker close-hauled; but one cannot ascertain the true course made, except when the wind is abaft. When you perceive long streaks of clouds meeting in a point on the horizon, you may be sure that the wind is in that quarter; but this evening the wind was variable; the needle fluctuated; the captain distrusted the erratic movements of the vessel. He steered carefully but resolutely, luffed her up, watched her coming to, prevented her from yawing, and from running into the wind's eye: noted the leeway, the little jerks of the helm; was observant of every roll and pitch of the vessel, of the difference in her speed, and of the variable gusts of wind. For fear of accidents, he was constantly on the look-out for squalls from off the land he was hugging, and above all he was cautious to keep her full; the direction of the breeze indicated by the compass being uncertain from the small size of the instrument. The captain's eyes, frequently lowered, remarked every change in the waves.

Once, nevertheless, he raised them towards the sky, and tried to make out the three stars of Orion's belt. These stars are called the three magi, and an old proverb of the ancient Spanish pilots declares that, "He who sees the three magi is not far from the Saviour."

This glance of the captain's tallied with an aside growled out, at the other end of the vessel, by the old man. "We don't even see the pointers, nor the star Antares, red as he is. Not one is distinct."

No care troubled the other fugitives.

Still, when the first hilarity they felt in their escape had passed away, they could not help remembering that they were at sea in the month of January, and that the wind was frozen. It was impossible to establish themselves in the cabin. It was much too narrow and too much encumbered by bales and baggage. The baggage belonged to the passengers, the bales to the crew, for the hooker was no pleasure boat, and was engaged in smug-

gling. The passengers were obliged to settle themselves on deck, a condition to which these wanderers easily resigned themselves. Open-air habits make it simple for vagabonds to arrange themselves for the night. The open air (*la belle étoile*) is their friend, and the cold helps them to sleep—sometimes to die.

This night, as we have seen, there was no *belle étoile*.

Languedocian and the Genoese, while waiting for supper, rolled themselves up near the women, at the foot of the mast, in some tarpaulin which the sailors had thrown them.

The old man remained at the bow motionless, and apparently insensible to the cold.

The captain of the hooker, from the helm where he was standing, uttered a sort of guttural call somewhat like the cry of the American bird called the exclaimer; at his call the chief of the band drew near, and the captain addressed him thus:

"*Eteheco Jaïna.*" These two words, which mean "tiller of the mountain," form with the old Cantabri a solemn preface to any subject which should command attention.

Then the captain pointed the old man out to the chief, and the dialogue continued in Spanish; it was not, indeed, a very correct dialect, being that of the mountains. Here are the questions and answers.

"*Eteheco jaïna, que es este hombre?*"

"*Un hombre.*"

"*Que lenguas habla?*"

"*Todas.*"

"*Que cosas sabe?*"

"*Todas.*"

"*Qual país?*"

"*Ningun, y todos.*"

"*Qual dios?*"

"*Dios.*"

"*Como le llamas?*"

"*El tonto.*"

"*Como dices que le llamas?*"

"*El sabio.*"

"*En vuestra tropa que esta?*"

"*Esta lo que esta.*"

"*El gefe?*"

"*No.*"

"*Pues que esta?*"

"*La alma.*" \*

The chief and the captain parted, each reverting to his own meditation, and a little while afterwards the *Matutina* left the gulf.

Now came the great rolling of the open sea. The ocean in the spaces between the foam was slimy in appearance. The waves seen through the twilight in indistinct outline, somewhat resembled splashes of gall. Here and there a wave floating flat showed cracks and stars, like a pane of glass broken by stones; in the centre of these stars, in a revolving orifice, trembled a phosphorescence, like that feline reflection of vanished light which shines in the eyeballs of owls.

Proudly, like a bold swimmer, the *Matutina* crossed the dangerous Shambles shoal. This bank, a hidden obstruction at the entrance of Portland roads, is not a barrier, it is an amphitheatre—a circus of sand under the sea, its benches cut out by the circling of the waves—an arena, round and symmetrical, as high as a Jungfrau—only drowned—a coliseum of the ocean, seen by the diver in the vision-like transparency which engulfs him, such is the Shambles shoal. There hydras fight, leviathans meet. There, says the legend, at the bottom of the gigantic shaft, are the wrecks of ships, seized and sunk by the huge spider Kraken, also called the fish-mountain. Such things lie in the fearful shadow of the sea.

These spectral realities, unknown to man, are manifested at the surface by a slight shiver.

In this nineteenth century, the Shambles bank is in ruins; the breakwater recently constructed has overthrown and mutilated, by the force of its surf, that high submarine architecture, just as the jetty, built at the Croisic in 1760, changed, by a quarter of an hour, the courses of the tides. And yet the tide is eternal. But eternity obeys man more than man imagines.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### A CLOUD DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS ENTERS ON THE SCENE.

THE old man whom the chief of the band had named first the Madman, then the Sage

Who is his God?—God.

What do you call him?—The madman.

What do you say you call him?—The wise man.

In your band, what is he?—He is what he is.

The chief?—No.

Then what is he?—The soul.

HUGO. VOL. III.—17

\* Tiller of the mountain, who is that man?—A man.  
What tongue does he speak?—All.  
What things does he know?—All.  
What is his country?—None and all.

now never left the fore-castle. Since they crossed the Shambles shoal, his attention had been divided between the heavens and the waters. He looked down, he looked upwards, and above all watched the North-east.

The skipper gave the helm to a sailor, stepped over the after-hatchway, crossed the gangway, and went on to the fore-castle. He approached the old man, but not in front. He stood a little behind, with elbows resting on his hips, with outstretched hands, the head on one side, with open eyes and arched eyebrows, and a smile in the corners of his mouth, an attitude of curiosity hesitating between mockery and respect.

The old man, either that it was his habit to talk to himself, or that hearing some one behind incited him to speech, began to soliloquize while he looked into space.

"The Meridian from which the right ascension is calculated, is marked in this century by four stars, the Polar, Cassiopeia's Chair, Andromeda's Head, and the star Algenib, which is in Pegasus. But there is not one visible."

These words followed each other mechanically, confused, and scarcely articulated, as if he did not care to pronounce them. They floated out of his mouth and dispersed. Soliloquy is the smoke exhaled by the inmost fires of the soul.

The skipper broke in, "My lord!"

The old man, perhaps rather deaf as well as very thoughtful, went on,—

"Too few stars, and too much wind. The breeze continually changes its direction and blows inshore; thence it rises perpendicularly. This results from the land being warmer than the water. Its atmosphere is lighter. The cold and dense wind of the sea rushes in to replace it. From this cause, in the upper regions the wind blows towards the land from every quarter. It would be advisable to make long tacks between the true and apparent parallel. When the latitude by observation differs from the latitude by dead reckoning, by not more than three minutes in thirty miles, or by four minutes in sixty miles, you are in the true course."

The skipper bowed, but the old man saw him not. The latter, who wore what resembled an Oxford or Gottingen university gown, did not relax his haughty and rigid attitude. He observed the waters as a critic of waves and of men. He studied the billows, but almost

as if he was about to demand his turn to speak amidst their turmoil, and teach them something. There was in him both the pedagogue and soothsayer. He seemed an oracle of the deep.

He continued his soliloquy, which was perhaps intended to be heard.

"We might strive if we had a wheel instead of a helm. With a speed of twelve miles an hour, a force of twenty pounds exerted on the wheel produces three hundred thousand pounds' effect on the course. And more too. For in some cases, with a double block and runner, they can get two more revolutions."

The skipper bowed a second time, and said, "My lord!"

The old man's eye rested on him, he had turned his head without moving his body.

"Call me Doctor."

"Master Doctor, I am the skipper."

"Just so," said the doctor.

The doctor, as henceforth we shall call him, appeared willing to converse.

"Skipper, have you an English sextant?"

"No."

"Without an English sextant you cannot take an altitude at all."

"The Basques," replied the captain, "took altitudes before there were any English."

"Be careful: you are not taken aback."

"I keep her away when necessary."

"Have you tried how many knots she is running?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Just now."

"How?"

"By the log."

"Did you take the trouble to look at the triangle?"

"Yes."

"Did the sand run through the glass in exactly thirty seconds?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure that the sand has not worn the hole between the globes?"

"Yes."

"Have you proved the sand-glass by the oscillations of a bullet?"

"Suspended by a rope yarn drawn out from the top of a coil of soaked hemp? Undoubtedly."

"Have you waxed the yarn lest it should stretch?"

"Yes."

"Have you tested the log?"

"I tested the sand-glass by the bullet, and checked the log by a round shot."

"Of what size was the shot?"

"One foot in diameter"

"Heavy enough?"

"It is an old round shot of our war hooker, La Casse de Par-Grand."

"Which was in the Armada?"

"Yes."

"And which carried six hundred soldiers, fifty sailors, and twenty-five guns?"

"Shipwreck knows it."

"How did you compute the resistance of the water to the shot?"

"By means of a German scale."

"Have you taken into account the resistance of the rope supporting the shot to the waves?"

"Yes."

"What was the result?"

"The resistance of the water was 170 pounds."

"That's to say, she is running four French leagues an hour."

"And three Dutch leagues."

"But that is the difference merely of the vessel's way and the rate at which the sea is running?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Whither are you steering?"

"For a creek I know, between Loyola and St. Sabastian."

"Make the latitude of the harbor's mouth as soon as possible."

"Yes, as near as I can."

"Beware of gusts and currents. The first cause the second."

"Traidores."\*

"No abuse. The sea understands. Insult nothing. Rest satisfied with watching."

"I have watched, and I do watch. Just now the tide is running against the wind; by-and-by, when it turns, we shall be all right."

"Have you a chart?"

"No; not for this channel."

"Then you sail by rule of thumb?"

"Not at all. I have a compass."

"The compass is one eye, the chart the other."

"A man with one eye can see."

"How do you compute the difference between the true and apparent course?"

"I've got my standard compass, and I make a guess."

"To guess is all very well. To know for certain is better."

"Christopher guessed."

"When there is a fog and the needle revolves treacherously, you can never tell on which side you should look out for squalls, and the end of it is that you know neither the true or apparent day's work. An ass with his chart is better off than a wizard with his oracle."

"There is no fog in the breeze yet, and I see no cause for alarm."

"Ships are like flies in the spider's web of the sea."

"Just now both winds and waves are tolerably favorable."

"Black specks quivering on the billows, such are men on the ocean."

"I dare say there will be nothing wrong to-night."

"You may get into such a mess that you will find it hard to get out of it."

"All goes well at present."

The doctor's eyes were fixed on the north-east. The skipper continued,—

"Let us once reach the Gulf of Gascony, and I answer for our safety. Ah! I should say I am at home there. I know it well, my Gulf of Gascony. It is a little basin, often very boisterous; but there, I know every sounding in it and the nature of the bottom; mud opposite San Cipriano, shells opposite Cizarque, sand off Cape Peñas, little pebbles off Boncaut de Mimizan, and I know the color of every pebble."

The skipper broke off, the doctor was no longer listening.

The doctor gazed at the northeast. Over that icy face passed an extraordinary expression. All the agony of terror possible to a mask of stone was depicted there. From his mouth escaped this word, "Good!"

His eyeballs, which had all at once become quite round like an owl's, were dilated with stupor on discovering a speck on the horizon. He added,—

"It is well. As for me, I am resigned."

The skipper looked at him. The doctor went on talking to himself, or to some one in the deep:

"I say, yes."

Then he was silent, opened his eyes wider

\* Traitors.

and wider with renewed attention on that which he was watching, and said,—

"It is coming from afar, but not the less surely will it come."

The arc of the horizon which occupied the visual rays and thoughts of the doctor, being opposite to the west, was illuminated by the transcendent reflection of twilight, as if it were day. This arc, limited in extent, and surrounded by streaks of greyish vapor, was uniformly blue, but of a leaden rather than cerulean blue. The doctor having completely returned to the contemplation of the sea, pointed to this atmospheric arc, and said,—

"Skipper, do you see?"

"What?"

"That."

"What?"

"Out there."

"A blue spot? Yes."

"What is it?"

"A niche in heaven."

"For those who go to heaven; for those who go elsewhere—it is another affair." And he emphasized these enigmatical words with an appalling expression which was unseen in the darkness.

A silence ensued. The skipper, remembering the two names given by the chief to this man, asked himself the question,—

"Is he a madman, or is he a sage?"

The stiff and bony finger of the doctor remained immovably pointing, like a sign-post, to the misty blue spot in the sky.

The skipper looked at this spot.

"In truth," he growled out, "it is not sky but clouds."

"A blue cloud is worse than a black cloud," said the doctor; "and," he added, "it's a snow-cloud."

"*La nube de la nieve*," said the skipper, as if trying to understand the word better by translating it.

"Do you know what a snow-cloud is?" asked the doctor.

"No."

"You'll know by-and-by."

The skipper again turned his attention to the horizon.

Continuing to observe the cloud, he muttered between his teeth,—

"One month of squalls, another of wet; January with its gales, February with its rains, that's all the winter we Austrians get.

Our rain even is warm. We've no snow but on the mountains. Ay, ay, look out for the avalanche. The avalanche is no respecter of persons. The avalanche is a brute."

"And the waterspout is a monster," said the doctor, adding, after a pause, "Here it comes." He continued, "Several winds are getting up together. A strong wind from the west, and a gentle wind from the east."

"That last is a deceitful one," said the skipper.

The blue cloud was growing larger.

"If the snow," continued the doctor, "is appalling when it slips down the mountain, think what it is when it falls from the Pole!"

His eye was glassy. The cloud seemed to spread over his face and simultaneously over the horizon. He continued, in musing tones,—

"Every minute the fatal hour draws nearer. The will of heaven is about to be manifested."

The skipper asked himself again this question,—“Is he a madman?”

"Skipper," began the doctor, without taking his eyes off the cloud, "have you often crossed the Channel?"

"This is the first time."

The doctor, who was absorbed by the blue cloud, and who, as a sponge can take up but a definite quantity of water, had but a definite measure of anxiety, displayed no more emotion at this answer of the skipper than was expressed by a slight shrug of his shoulders.

"How is that?"

"Master Doctor, my usual cruise is to Ireland. I sail from Fontarabia to Black Harbor, or to the Achill Islands. I go sometimes to Braich-y-Pwll, a point on the Welsh coast. But I always steer outside the Scilly Islands. I do not know this sea at all."

"That's serious. Woe to him who is inexperienced on the ocean! One ought to be familiar with the Channel: the Channel is the Sphinx. Look out for shoals."

"We are in twenty-five fathoms here."

"We ought to get into fifty-five fathoms to the west, and avoid even twenty fathoms to the east."

"We'll sound as we get on."

"The Channel is not an ordinary sea. The water rises fifty feet with the spring tides, and twenty-five with neap tides. Here we are

in slack water. I thought you looked scared."

"We'll sound to-night."

"To sound you must heave-to, and that you cannot do."

"Why not?"

"On account of the wind."

"We'll try."

"The squall is close on us."

"We'll sound, Master Doctor."

"You could not even bring-to."

"Trust in God."

"Take care what you say. Pronounce not lightly the awful name."

"I will sound, I tell you."

"Be sensible; you will have a gale of wind presently."

"I say that I will try for soundings."

"The resistance of the water will prevent the lead from sinking, and the line will break. Ah! so this is your first time in these waters?"

"The first time."

"Very well; in that case, listen, skipper."

The tone of the word Listen was so commanding, that the skipper made an obeisance.

"Master Doctor, I am all attention."

"Port your helm, and haul up on the starboard tack."

"What do you mean?"

"Steer your course to the west."

"Caramba!"

"Steer your course to the west."

"Impossible!"

"As you will. What I tell you is for the others' sake. As for myself, I am indifferent."

"But, Master Doctor, steer west?"

"Yes, skipper."

"The wind will be dead ahead."

"Yes, skipper."

"She'll pitch like the devil."

"Moderate your language. Yes, skipper."

"The vessel would be in irons."

"Yes, skipper."

"That means very likely the mast will go."

"Possibly."

"Do you wish me to steer west?"

"Yes."

"I cannot."

"In that case settle your reckoning with the sea."

"The wind ought to change."

"It will not change all night."

"Why not?"

"Because it is a wind 1200 leagues in length."

"Make headway against such a wind? Impossible!"

"To the west, I tell you."

"I'll try, but in spite of everything, she will fall off."

"That's the danger."

"The wind sets us to the east."

"Don't go to the east."

"Why not?"

"Skipper, do you know what is for us the word of death?"

"No."

"Death is the east."

"I'll steer west."

This time the doctor, having turned right round, looked the skipper full in the face, and with his eyes resting on him, as though to implant the idea in his head, pronounced slowly, syllable by syllable, these words,—

"If to-night, out at sea, we hear the sound of a bell, the ship is lost."

The skipper pondered in amaze.

"What do you mean?"

The doctor did not answer. His countenance, expressive for a moment, was now reserved. His eyes became vacuous. He did not appear to hear the skipper's wondering question. He was now attending to his own monologue. His lips let fall, as if mechanically, in a low mumuring tone, these words,—

"The time has come for sullied souls to purify themselves."

The skipper made that expressive grimace, which raises the chin towards the nose.

"He is more madman than sage," he growled, and moved off.

Nevertheless he steered west.

But the wind and the sea were rising.

## CHAPTER V.

### HARDQUANONNE.

THE mist was deformed by all sorts of inequalities, bulging out at once on every point of the horizon, as if invisible mouths were busy puffing out the bags of wind. The formation of the clouds was becoming ominous. In the west, as in the east, the sky's depths were now invaded by the blue cloud: it advanced in the teeth of the wind. These contradictions are part of the wind's vagaries.

The sea, which a moment before wore

scales, now wore a skin—such is the nature of that dragon. It was no longer a crocodile, it was a boa. The skin, lead-colored and dirty, looked thick, and was crossed by heavy wrinkles. Here and there, on its surface, bubbles of surge, like pustules, gathered and then burst. The foam was like a leprosy. It was at this moment that the hooker, still seen from afar by the child, lighted her signal.

A quarter of an hour elapsed.

The skipper looked for the doctor: he was no longer on deck. Directly the skipper had left him, the doctor had stooped his somewhat ungainly form under the hood, and had entered the cabin; there he had sat down near the stove, on a block. He had taken a shagreen ink-bottle and a cordwain pocket-book from his pocket; he had extracted from his pocket-book a parchment folded four times, old, stained, and yellow; he had opened the sheet, taken a pen out of his ink-case, placed the pocket-book flat on his knee, and the parchment on the pocket-book; and by the rays of the lantern, which was lighting the cook, he set to writing on the back of the parchment. The roll of the waves inconvenienced him. He wrote thus for some time.

As he wrote, the doctor remarked the gourd of aguardiente, which the Provençal tasted every time he added a grain of pimento to the puchero, as if he were consulting it in reference to the seasoning. The doctor noticed the gourd, not because it was a bottle of brandy, but because of a name which was plaited in the wicker-work with red rushes on a background of white. There was light enough in the cabin to permit of his reading the name.

The doctor paused, and spelled in a low voice,—

“Hardquanonne.”

Then he addressed the cook.

“I had not observed that gourd before; did it belong to Hardquanonne?”

“Yes,” the cook answered; “to our poor comrade, Hardquanonne.”

The doctor went on.

“To Hardquanonne, the Fleming of Flanders?”

“Yes.”

“Who is in prison?”

“Yes.”

“In the dungeon at Chatham?”

“It is his gourd,” replied the cook; “and he was my friend. I keep it in re-

membrance of him. When shall we see him again? It is the bottle he used to wear slung over his hip.”

The doctor took up his pen again, and continued laboriously tracing somewhat straggling lines on the parchment. He was evidently anxious that his handwriting should be very legible; and, at length, notwithstanding the tremulousness of the vessel and the tremulousness of age, he finished what he wanted to write.

It was time, for, suddenly, a sea struck the craft, a mighty rush of waters besieged the hooker, and they felt her break into that fearful dance in which ships lead off with the tempest.

The doctor rose and approached the stove, meeting the ship's motion with his knees dexterously bent, dried as best he could, at the stove where the pot was boiling, the lines he had written, refolded the parchment in the pocket-book, and replaced the pocket-book and the ink-horn in his pocket.

The stove was not the least ingenious piece of interior economy in the hooker. It was judiciously isolated. Meanwhile, the pot heaved—the Provençal was watching it.

“Fish broth,” said he.

“For the fishes,” replied the doctor. Then he went on deck again.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THEY THINK THAT HELP IS AT HAND.

THROUGH his growing pre-occupation, the doctor in some sort reviewed the situation; and anyone near to him might have heard these words drop from his lips,—

“Too much rolling, and not enough pitching.”

Then recalled to himself by the dark workings of his mind, he sank again into thought, as a miner into his shaft. His meditation in nowise interfered with his watch on the sea. The contemplation of the sea is in itself a reverie.

The dark punishment of the waters, eternally tortured, was commencing. A lamentation arose from the whole main. Preparations, confused and melancholy, were forming in space. The doctor observed all before him, and lost no detail. There was, however, no sign of scrutiny in his face. One does not scrutinize hell.

A vast commotion, yet half latent, but visible through the turmoils in space, increased and irritated, more and more, the winds, the vapors, the waves. Nothing is so logical and nothing appears so absurd as the ocean. Self-dispersion is the essence of its sovereignty, and is one of the elements of its redundancy. The sea is ever for and against. It knots, that it may unravel, itself; one of its slopes attacks, the other relieves. No apparition is so wonderful as the waves. Who can paint the alternating hollows and promontories, the valleys, the melting bosoms, the sketches? How render the thickets of foam, blendings of mountains and dreams? The indescribable is everywhere there, in the rending, in the frowning, in the anxiety, in the perpetual contradiction, in the chiaroscuro, in the pendants of the cloud, in the keys of the ever-open vault, in the disaggregation without rupture, in the funereal tumult caused by all that madness!

The wind had just set due north. Its violence was so favourable and so useful in driving them away from England that the captain of the *Matutina* had made up his mind to set all sail. The hooker slipped through the foam as at a gallop, the wind right aft, bounding from wave to wave in a gay frenzy. The fugitives were delighted, and laughed; they clapped their hands, applauded the surf, the sea, the wind, the sails, the swift progress, the flight, all unmindful of the future. The doctor appeared not to see them, and dreamt on.

Every vestige of day had faded away. This was the moment when the child, watching from the distant cliff, lost sight of the hooker. Up to then, his glance had remained fixed, and, as it were, leaning on the vessel. What part had that look in fate? When the hooker was lost to sight in the distance, and when the child could no longer see aught, the child went north and the ship went south.

All were plunged in darkness.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SUPERHUMAN HORRORS.

ON their part it was with wild jubilee and delight that those on board the hooker saw the hostile land recede and lessen behind them. By degrees the dark ring of ocean rose higher, dwarfing in twilight Portland,

Purbeck, Tineham, Kimmeridge, the Matravers, the long streaks of dim cliffs, and the coast dotted with lighthouses.

England disappeared. The fugitives had now nothing round them but the sea.

All at once night grew awful.

There was no longer extent nor space; the sky became blackness, and closed in round the vessel. The snow began to fall slowly; a few flakes appeared. They might have been ghosts. Nothing else was visible in the course of the wind. They felt as if yielded up. A snare lurked in every possibility.

It is in this cavernous darkness that in our climate the Polar waterspout makes its appearance.

A great muddy cloud, like to the belly of a hydra, hung over ocean, and in places its lividity adhered to the waves. Some of these adherences resembled pouches with holes, pumping the sea, disgorging vapor, and refilling themselves with water. Here and there these suctions drew up cones of foam on the sea.

The boreal storm hurled itself on the hooker. The hooker rushed to meet it. The squall and the vessel met as though to insult each other.

In the first mad shock not a sail was clewed up, not a jib lowered, not a reef taken in, so much is flight a delirium. The mast creaked and bent back as if in fear.

Cyclones, in our northern hemisphere, circle from left to right, in the same direction as the hands of a watch, with a velocity which is sometimes as much as 60 miles an hour. Although she was entirely at the mercy of that whirling power, the hooker behaved as if she were out in moderate weather, without any further precaution than keeping her head on to the rollers, with the wind broad on the bow so as to avoid being pooped or caught broadside on. This semi-prudence would have availed her nothing in case of the wind's shifting and taking her aback.

A deep rumbling was brewing up in the distance. The roar of the abyss, nothing can be compared to it. It is the great brutish howl of the universe. What we call matter, that unsearchable organism, that amalgamation of incommensurable energies, in which can occasionally be detected an almost imperceptible degree of intention which makes us shudder, that blind, benighted cosmos, that enigmatical Pan, has a cry, a strange



cry, prolonged, obstinate, and continuous, which is less than speech and more than thunder. That cry is the hurricane. Other voices, songs, melodies, clamors, tones, proceed from nests, from broods, from pairings, from nuptials, from homes. This one, a trumpet, comes out of the Naught, which is All. Other voices express the soul of the universe, this one expresses the monster. It is the howl of the Formless. It is the inarticulate, finding utterance in the indefinite. A thing it is full of pathos and terror. Those clamors converse above and beyond man. They rise, fall, undulate, determine waves of sound, form all sorts of wild surprises for the mind, now burst close to the ear with the importunity of a peal of trumpets, now assail us with the rumbling hoarseness of distance. Giddy uproar which resembles a language and which, in fact, is a language. It is the effort which the world makes to speak. It is the lisping of the wonderful. In this wail is manifested vaguely all that the vast dark palpitance endures, suffers, accepts, rejects. For the most part it talks nonsense; it is like an access of chronic sickness, and rather an epilepsy diffused than a force employed; we fancy that we are witnessing the descent of supreme evil into the infinite. At moments we seem to discern a reclamation of the elements, some vain effort of chaos to reassert itself over creation. At times it is a complaint. The void bewails and justifies itself. It is as the pleadings of the world's cause. We can fancy that the universe is engaged in a law-suit; we listen, we try to grasp the reasons given, the redoubtable for and against, such a moaning of the shadows has the tenacity of a syllogism. Here is a vast trouble for thought. Here is the *raison d'être* of mythologies and polytheisms. To the terror of those great murmurs are added superhuman outlines melting away as they appear,—Eumenides which are almost distinct, throats of furies shaped in the clouds, Plutonian chimeras almost defined. No horrors equal those sobs, those laughs, those tricks of tumult, those inscrutable questions and answers, those appeals to unknown aid. Man knows not what to become in the presence of that awful incantation. He bows under the enigma of those Draconian intonations. What latent meaning have they? What do they signify? What do they threaten?

What do they implore? It would seem as though all bonds were loosened. Vociferations from precipice to precipice, from air to water, from the wind to the wave, from the rain to the rock, from the zenith to the nadir, from the stars to the foam,—the abyss unmuzzled—such is that tumult, complicated by some mysterious strife with evil consciences.

The loquacity of night is not less lugubrious than its silence. One feels in it the anger of the Unknown.

Night is a presence. Presence of what?

For that matter we must distinguish between night and the shadows. In the night there is the absolute; in the darkness the multiple. Grammar, logic as it is, admits of no singular for the shadows. The night is one, the shadows are many.\*

This mist of nocturnal mystery is the scattered, the fugitive, the crumbling, the fatal; one feels earth no longer, one feels the other reality.

In the shadow, infinite and indefinite, lives something or some one; but that which lives there forms part of our death. After our earthly passage, when that shadow shall be light for us, the life which is beyond our life shall seize us. Meanwhile it appears to touch and try us. Obscurity is a pressure. Night is, as it were, a hand placed on our soul. At certain hideous and solemn hours we feel that which is beyond the wall of the tomb encroaching on us.

Never does this proximity of the unknown seem more imminent than in storms at sea. The horrible combines with the fantastic. The possible interrupter of human actions, the old Cloud-compeller, has it in his power to mould, in whatsoever shape he chooses, the inconsistent element, the limitless incoherence, the force diffused and undecided of aim. That mystery, the tempest, every instant accepts and executes some unknown changes of will, apparent or real.

Poets have, in all ages, called this the caprice of the waves. But there is no such thing as caprice. The disconcerting enigmas which in nature we call caprice, and in human life chance, are splinters of a law revealed to us in glimpses.

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\* The above is a very inefficient and rather absurd translation of the French. It turns upon the fact that in the French language the word for darkness is plural—*Ténèbres*.—TRANSLATOR.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## IL ET NOX.

THE characteristic of the snow-storm is its blackness. Nature's habitual aspect during a storm, the earth or sea black and the sky pale, is reversed ; the sky is black, the ocean white, foam below, darkness above ; an horizon walled in with smoke ; a zenith roofed with crape. The tempest resembles a cathedral hung with mourning, but no light in that cathedral : no phantom lights on the crests of the waves, no spark, no phosphorescence, naught but a huge shadow. The Polar cyclone differs from the Tropical cyclone, inasmuch as the one sets fire to every light, and the other extinguishes them all. The world is suddenly converted into the arched vault of a cave. Out of the night falls a dust of pale spots, which hesitate between sky and sea. These spots, which are flakes of snow, slip, wander, and float. It is like the tears of a winding-sheet putting themselves into life-like motion. A mad wind mingles with this dissemination. Blackness crumbling into whiteness, the furious into the obscure, all the tumult of which the sepulchre is capable, a whirlwind under a catafalque—such is the snow-storm. Underneath trembles the ocean, forming and reforming over portentous unknown depths.

In the Polar wind, which is electrical, the flakes turn suddenly into hailstones, and the air becomes filled with projectiles ; the water crackles, shot with grape.

No thunderstrokes : the lightning of boreal storms is silent. What is sometimes said of the cat, "it swears," may be applied to this lightning. It is a menace proceeding from a mouth half open, and strangely inexorable. The snow-storm is a storm blind and dumb ; when it has passed, the ships also are often blind and the sailors dumb.

To escape from such an abyss is difficult.

It would be wrong, however, to believe shipwreck to be absolutely inevitable. The Danish fishermen of Disco and the Balesin ; the seekers of black whales ; Hearn, steering towards Behring Strait, to discover the mouth of Coppermine River ; Hudson, Mackenzie, Vancouver, Ross, Dumont D'Urville, all underwent at the Pole itself the wildest hurricanes, and escaped out of them.

It was into this description of tempest that the hooker had entered, triumphant and in

full sail. Frenzy against frenzy. When Montgomery, escaping from Rouen, threw his galley, with all the force of its oars, against the chain barring the Seine at la Bouille, he showed similar effrontery.

The *Matutina* sailed on fast ; she bent so much under her sails, that at moments she made a fearful angle with the sea of fifteen degrees ; but her good bellied keel adhered to the water as if glued to it. The keel resisted the grasp of the hurricane. The lantern at the prow cast its light ahead.

The cloud, full of winds, dragging its tumor over the deep, cramped and eat more and more into the sea round the hooker. Not a gull, not a sea-mew, nothing but snow. The expanse of the field of waves was becoming contracted and terrible ; only three or four gigantic ones were visible.

Now and then a tremendous flash of lightning of a red copper color broke out behind the super-position of the horizon and the zenith ; that sudden release of vermilion flame revealed the horror of the clouds ; that abrupt conflagration of the depths, to which for an instant the first tiers of clouds and the distant boundaries of the celestial chaos seemed to adhere, placed the abyss in perspective. On this ground of fire the snow-flakes showed black ; they might have been compared to dark butterflies flying about a furnace—then all was extinguished.

The first explosion over, the squall, still pursuing the hooker, began to roar in thorough bass. This phase of grumbling is a perilous diminution of uproar. Nothing is so terrifying as this monologue of the storm. This gloomy recitative appears to serve as a rest to the mysterious combating forces, and indicates a species of patrol kept in the unknown.

The hooker held wildly on her course. Her two mainsails especially were doing fearful work. The sky and sea were as of ink with jets of foam running higher than the mast. Every instant masses of water swept the deck like a deluge, and at each roll of the vessel, the hawse-holes, now to starboard, now to larboard, became as so many open-mouths vomiting back the foam into the sea. The women had taken refuge in the cabin, but the men remained on deck ; the blinding snow eddied round, the spitting surge mingled with it. All was fury.

At that moment the chief of the band,

standing abaft on the stern-frames, holding on with one hand to the shrouds, and with the other taking off the kerchief he wore round his head and waving it in the light of the lantern, gay and arrogant, with pride in his face, and his hair in wild disorder, intoxicated by all the darkness, cried out,—

“We are free!”

“Free, free, free,” echoed the fugitives, and the band, seizing hold of the rigging, rose up on deck.

“Hurrah!” shouted the chief.

And the band shouted in the storm,—

“Hurrah!”

Just as this clamor was dying away in the tempest, a loud solemn voice rose from the other end of the vessel, saying,—

“Silence!”

All turned their heads. The darkness was thick, and the doctor was leaning against the mast so that he seemed a part of it, and they could not see him.

The voice spoke again,—

“Listen!”

All were silent.

Then did they distinctly hear through the darkness the toll of a bell.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CHARGE CONFIDED TO A RAGING SEA.

THE skipper, at the helm, burst out laughing,—

“A bell, that’s good. We are on the larboard tack. What does the bell prove? Why, that we have land to starboard.”

The firm and measured voice of the doctor replied,—

“You have not land to starboard.”

“But we have,” shouted the skipper.

“No!”

“But that bell tolls from the land.”

“That bell,” said the doctor, “tolls from the sea.”

A shudder passed over these daring men, the haggard faces of the two women appeared above the companion like two hobgoblins conjured up: the doctor took a step forward, separating his tall form from the mast. From the depth of the night’s darkness came the toll of the bell.

The doctor resumed,—

“There is in the midst of the sea, half way between Portland and the Channel Islands, a

buoy, placed there as a caution; that buoy is moored by chains to the shoal, and floats on the top of the water. On the buoy is fixed an iron trestle, and across the trestle a bell is hung. In bad weather heavy seas toss the buoy, and the bell rings. That is the bell you hear.”

The doctor paused to allow an extra-violent gust of wind to pass over, waited until the sound of the bell re-asserted itself, and then went on,—

“To hear that bell in a storm, when the nor’-wester is blowing, is to be lost. Wherefore? For this reason: if you hear the bell, it is because the wind brings it to you. But the wind is nor’-westerly, and the breakers of Aurigny lie east. You hear the bell only because you are between the buoy and the breakers. It is on those breakers the wind is driving you. You are on the wrong side of the buoy: If you were on the right side, you would be out at sea on a safe course, and you would not hear the bell. The wind would not convey the sound to you. You would pass close to the buoy without knowing it. We are out of our course. That bell is shipwreck sounding the tocsin. Now, look out!”

As the doctor spoke the bell, soothed by a lull of the storm, rang slowly stroke by stroke; and its intermitting toll seemed to testify to the truth of the old man’s words. It was as the knell of the abyss.

All listened breathless. Now to the voice. Now to the bell.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE COLOSSAL SAVAGE, THE STORM.

IN the meantime the skipper had caught up his speaking-trumpet.

“Strike every sail, my lads; let go the sheets, man the down-hauls, lower ties and brails. Let us steer to the west, let us regain the high sea; head for the buoy, steer for the bell, there’s an offing down there. We’ve yet a chance.”

“Try,” said the doctor.

Let us remark here, by the way, that this ringing buoy, a kind of bell-tower on the deep, was removed in 1802. There are yet alive very old mariners who remember hearing it. It forewarned, but rather too late.

The orders of the skipper were obeyed. The Languedocian made a third sailor. All

bore a hand. Not satisfied with brailing up, they furled the sails; lashed the earrings, secured the clew-lines, buntlines, and leeclines; and clapped preventor-shrouds on the block straps, which thus might serve as backstays. They fished the mast. They battened down the ports and bull's eyes, which is a method of walling up a ship. These evolutions, though executed in a lubberly fashion, were, nevertheless, thoroughly effective. The hooker was stripped to bare poles. But, in proportion as the vessel, stowing every stitch of canvas, became more helpless, the havoc of both winds and waves increased. The seas ran mountains high. The hurricane, like an executioner hastening to his victim, began to dismember the craft. There came, in the twinkling of an eye, a dreadful crash: the top-sails were blown from the bolt-ropes, the chess-trees were hewn asunder, the deck was swept clear, the shrouds were carried away, the mast went by the board, all the lumber of the wreck was flying in shivers. The main shrouds gave out although they were turned in, and stoppered to four fathoms.

The magnetic currents common to snowstorms hastened the destruction of the rigging. It broke as much from the effect of effluvium as the violence of the wind. Most of the chain gear, fouled in the blocks, ceased to work. Forward the bows, aft the quarters, quivered under the terrific shocks. One wave washed overboard the compass and its binnacle. A second carried away the boat, which, like a box slung under a carriage, had been, in accordance with the quaint Asturian custom, lashed to the bowsprit. A third breaker wrenched off the spritsail yard. A fourth swept away the figure-head and signal light. The rudder only was left.

To replace the ship's bow lantern they set fire to, and suspended at the stem, a large block of wood covered with oakum and tar.

The mast, broken in two, all bristling with quivering splinters, ropes, blocks, and yards, cumbered the deck. In falling it had stove in a plank of the starboard gunwale. The skipper, still firm at the helm, shouted,—

"While we can steer, we have yet a chance. The lower planks hold good. Axes, axes! Overboard with the mast! Clear the decks!"

Both crew and passengers worked with the excitement of despair. A few strokes of the hatchets, and it was done. They pushed the mast over the side. The deck was cleared.

"Now," continued the skipper, "take a rope's end and lash me to the helm." To the tiller they bound him.

While they were fastening him he laughed, and shouted,—

"Blow, old hurdy-gurdy, bellow. I've seen your equal off Cape Machichaco."

And when secured, he clutched the helm with that strange hilarity which danger awakens.

"All goes well, my lads. Long live our Lady of Buglose; let us steer west."

An enormous wave came down abeam, and fell on the vessel's quarter. There is always in storms a tiger-like wave, a billow fierce and decisive, which, attaining a certain height, creeps horizontally over the surface of the waters for a time, then rises, roars, rages, and falling on the distressed vessel, tears it limb from limb.

A cloud of foam covered the entire poop of the *Matutina*.

There was heard above the confusion of darkness and waters, a crash.

When the spray cleared off, when the stern again rose in view, the skipper and the helm had disappeared. Both had been swept away.

The helm and the man they had just secured to it, had passed with the wave into the hissing turmoil of the hurricane.

The chief of the band, gazing intently into the darkness, shouted,—

"*Te burlas de nosotros?*"

To this defiant exclamation there followed another cry.

"Let go the anchor. Save the skipper."

They rushed to the capstan and let go the anchor.

Hookers carry but one. In this case the anchor reached the bottom, but only to be lost. The bottom was of the hardest rock. The billows were raging with resistless force. The cable snapped like a thread.

The anchor lay at the bottom of the sea. At the cut-water there remained but the cable end protruding from the hawse-hole.

From this moment the hooker became a wreck. The *Matutina* was irrevocably disabled. The vessel, just before in full sail, and almost formidable in her speed, was now helpless. All her evolutions were uncertain and executed at random. She yielded passively and like a log to the capricious fury of the waves. That in a few minutes there should be in place of an eagle a useless

cripple, such a transformation is to be witnessed only at sea.

The howling of the wind became more and more frightful. A hurricane has terrible lungs; it makes unceasingly mournful additions to darkness, which cannot be intensified. The bell on the sea rang despairingly, as if tolled by a weird hand.

The *Matutina* drifted like a cork at the mercy of the waves. She sailed no longer—she merely floated. Every moment she seemed about to turn over on her back, like a dead fish. The good condition and perfectly water-tight state of the hull, alone saved her from this disaster. Below the water-line not a plank had started. There was not a cranny, chink, nor crack; and she had not made a single drop of water in the hold. This was lucky, as the pump, being out of order, was useless.

The hooker pitched and rolled frightfully in the seething billows. The vessel had throes as of sickness, and seemed to be trying to belch forth the unhappy crew.

Helpless they clung to the standing rigging, to the transoms, to the shank painters, to the gaskets, to the broken planks, the protruding nails of which tore their hands, to the warped riders, and to all the rugged projections of the stumps of the masts. From time to time they listened. The toll of the bell came over the waters fainter and fainter; one would have thought that it also was in distress. Its ringing was no more than an intermittent rattle. Then this rattle died away. Where were they? At what distance from the buoy? The sound of the bell had frightened them—its silence terrified them. The north-wester drove them forward in, perhaps, a fatal course. The felt themselves wafted on by maddened and ever-recurring gusts of wind. The wreck sped forward in the darkness. There is nothing more fearful than being hurried forward blindfold. They felt the abyss before them, over them, under them. It was no longer a run, it was a rush.

Suddenly, through the appalling density of the snow-storm, there loomed a red light. "A lighthouse!" cried the crew.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CASKETS.

It was indeed, the Caskets light.

A light house of the nineteenth century is

a high cylinder of masonry, surmounted by scientifically constructed machinery for throwing light. The Casket lighthouse in particular is a triple white tower, bearing three light-rooms. These three chambers revolve on clock-work wheels, with such precision that the man on watch who sees them from sea, can invariably take ten steps during their irradiation, and twenty-five during their eclipse. Everything is based on the focal plan, and on the rotation of the octagon drum, formed of eight wide simple lenses, in range, having above and below it two series of dioptric rings; an algebraic gear, secured from the effects of the beating of winds and waves by glass a millimetre thick, yet sometimes broken by the sea-eagles, which dash themselves like great moths against these gigantic lanterns. The building which encloses and sustains this mechanism, and in which it is set, is also mathematically constructed. Everything about it is plain, exact, bare, precise, correct. A lighthouse is a mathematical figure.

In the seventeenth century a lighthouse was a sort of plume of the land on the sea-shore. The architecture of a lighthouse tower was magnificent and extravagant. It was covered with balconies, balusters, lodges, alcoves, weathercocks. Nothing but masks, statues, foliage, volutes, reliefs, figures large and small, medallions with inscriptions. *Pax en bello*, said the Eddystone lighthouse. We may as well observe, by the way, that this declaration of peace did not always disarm the ocean. Winstanley repeated it on a lighthouse which he constructed at his own expense, at a wild spot near Plymouth. The tower being finished, he shut himself up in it to have it tried by tempest. The storm came and carried off the lighthouse, and Winstanley in it. Such excessive adornment gave too great a hold to the hurricane; as generals too brilliantly equipped in battle draw the enemy's fire. Besides whimsical designs in stone, they were loaded with whimsical designs in iron, copper and wood. The iron-work was in relief, the wood-work stood out. On the sides of the lighthouse there jutted out, clinging to the walls among the arabesques, engines of every description, useful and useless, windlasses, tackles, pulleys, counterpoises, ladders, cranes, grappels. On the pinnacle around the light, delicately-wrought iron-work held great iron chandeliers, in which were placed

## CHAPTER XII.

## FACE TO FACE WITH THE ROCK.

pieces of rope steeped in resin; wicks which burned doggedly and which no wind extinguished; and from top to bottom the tower was covered by a complication of sea standards, banderoles, banners, flags, pennons, colors which rose from stage to stage, from story to story, a medley of all hues, all shapes, all heraldic devices, all signals, all confusion up to the light chamber, making, in the storm a gay riot of tatters about the blaze. The insolent light on the brink of the abyss showed like a defiance, and inspired shipwrecked men with a spirit of daring. But the Casket light was not after this fashion.

It was, at that period, merely an old barbarous lighthouse, such as Henry I. had built after the loss of the *White Ship*—a flaming pile of wood under an iron trellis, a brazier behind a railing, a head of hair flaming in the wind.

The only improvement made in this lighthouse since the twelfth century was a pair of forge-bellows worked by an indented pendulum and a stone weight, which had been added to the light-chamber in 1610.

The fate of the sea-birds who chanced to fly against these old lighthouses was more tragic than those of our days. The birds dashed against them, attracted by the light, and fell into the brazier, where they could be seen struggling like black spirits in a hell, and at times they would fall back again between the railings upon the rock, red hot, smoking, lame, blind, like half burnt flies out of a lamp.

To a full-rigged ship in good trim answering readily to the pilot's handling the Caskets light is useful; it cries—Look out; it warns her of the shoal. To a disabled ship it is simply terrible. The hull, paralysed and inert, without resistance, without defence against the impulse of the storm, or the mad heaving of the waves, a fish without fins, a bird without wings, can but go where the wind wills. The lighthouse shows the end—points out the spot where it is doomed to disappear—throws light upon the burial. It is the torch of these sepulchre.

To light up the inexorable chasm—to warn against the inevitable—what more tragic mockery!

THE wretched people in distress on board the *Matutina* understood at once the mysterious derision which mocked their shipwreck. The appearance of the lighthouse raised their spirits at first, then overwhelmed them. Nothing could be done, nothing attempted. What has been said of kings, we may say of the waves—we are their people, we are their prey. All that they rave must be borne. The nor-wester was driving the hooker on the Caskets. They were nearing them; no evasion was possible. They drifted rapidly towards the reef; they felt that they were getting into shallow waters; the lead, if they could have thrown it to any purpose, would not have shown more than three or four fathoms. The shipwrecked people heard the dull sound of the waves being sucked within the submarine caves of the steep rock. They made out, under the lighthouse, like a dark cutting between two plates of granite, the narrow passage of the ugly, wild-looking little harbor, supposed to be full of the skeletons of men and carcasses of ships. It looked like the mouth of a cavern, rather than the entrance of a port. They could hear the crackling of the pile on high within the iron grating. A ghastly purple illuminated the storm, the collision of the rain and hail disturbed the mist. The black cloud and the red flame fought, serpent against serpent; live ashes, reft by the wind, flew from the fire, and the sudden assaults of the sparks seemed to drive the snow-flakes before them. The breakers, blurred at first in outline, now stood out in bold relief, a medley of rocks with peaks, crests, and vertebræ. The angles were formed by strongly marked red lines, and the inclined planes in blood-like streams of light. As they neared it, the outline of the reefs increased and rose—sinister.

One of the women, the Irishwoman, told her beads wildly.

In place of the skipper, who was the pilot, remained the chief, who was the captain. The Basques all know the mountain and the sea. They are bold on the precipice, and inventive in catastrophes.

They neared the cliff. They were about to strike. Suddenly they were so close to the great north rock of the Caskets, that it shut out the lighthouse from them. They

saw nothing but the rock and the red light behind it. The huge rock looming in the mist, was like a gigantic black woman with a hood of fire.

That ill-famed rock is called the Biblet. It faces the north side of the reef, which on the south is faced by another ridge, L'Etacq-aux-giulmets. The chief looked at the Biblet, and shouted,—

“A man with a will to take a rope to the rock. Who can swim?”

No answer.

No one on board knew how to swim, not even the sailors. An ignorance not uncommon among sea-faring people.

A beam nearly free of its lashings was swinging loose. The chief clasped it with both hands, crying, “Help me.”

They unlashed the beam. They had now at their disposal the very thing they wanted. From the defensive, they assumed the offensive.

It was a longish beam of heart of oak, sound and strong, useful either as a support or as an engine of attack, a lever for a burden, a ram against a tower.

“Ready!” shouted the chief.

All six getting foothold on the stump of the mast, threw their weight on the spar projecting over the side, straight as a lance towards a projection of the cliff.

It was a dangerous manœuvre. To strike at a mountain is audacity indeed. The six men might well have been thrown into the water by the shock.

There is variety in struggles with storms. After the hurricane, the shoal, after the wind, the rock. First the intangible, then the immovable, to be encountered.

Some minutes passed, such minutes as whiten men's hair.

The rock and the vessel were about to come in collision. The rock, like a culprit, awaited the blow.

A resistless wave rushed in; it ended the respite. It caught the vessel underneath, raised it, and swayed it for an instant as the sling swings its projectile.

“Steady!” cried the chief, “it is only a rock, and we are men.”

The beam was couched, the six men were one with it, its sharp bolts tore their arm-pits, but they did not feel them.

The wave dashed the hooker against the rock.

Then came the shock.

It came under the shapeless cloud of foam which always hides such catastrophies.

When this cloud fell into the sea, when the waves rolled back from the rock, the six men were tossing about the deck, but the *Matutina* was floating alongside the rock,—clear of it. The beam had stood and turned the vessel; the sea was running so fast, that in a few seconds she had left the Caskets behind.

Such things sometimes occur. It was a straight stroke of the bowsprit that saved Wood of Largo at the mouth of the Tay. In the wild neighborhood of Cape Winterton, and under the command of Captain Hamilton, it was the appliance of such a lever against the dangerous rock, Branodu-um that saved the *Royal Mary* from shipwreck, although she was but a Scotch built frigate. The force of the waves can be so abruptly decomposed, that changes of direction can be easily managed, or at least are possible even in the most violent collisions. There is a brute in the tempest. The hurricane is a bull and can be turned.

The whole secret of avoiding shipwreck, is to try and pass from the sescant to the tangent.

Such was the service rendered by the beam to the vessel. It had done the work of an oar, had taken the place of a rudder. But the manœuvre once performed could not be repeated. The beam was overboard; the shock of the collision had wrenched it out of the men's hands, and it was lost in the waves. To loosen another beam would have been to dislocate the hull.

The hurricane had carried off the *Matutina*. Presently the Caskets showed as a harmless encumbrance on the horizon. Nothing looks more out of countenance than a reef of rocks under such circumstances. There are in nature, in its obscure aspects, in which the visible blends with the invisible, certain motionless, surly profiles, which seem to express that a prey has escaped.

Thus glowered the Caskets while the *Matutina* fled.

The lighthouse paled in distance faded and disappeared.

There was something mournful in its extinction. Layers of mist sank down upon the now uncertain light. Its rays died in the waste of waters, the flame floated, struggled,

sank, and lost its form. It might have been a drowning creature. The braiser dwindled to the snuff of a candle; then nothing more but a weak, uncertain flutter. Around it spread a circle of extravasated glimmer; it was like the quenching of light in the pit of night.

The bell which had threatened was dumb. The lighthouse which had threatened had melted away. And yet it was more awful now that they had ceased to threaten. One was a voice, the other a torch. There was something human about them.

They were gone, and naught remained but the abyss.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### FACE TO FACE WITH NIGHT.

AGAIN was the hooker running with the shadow into immeasurable darkness,

The *Matutina*, escaped from the Caskets, sank and rose from billow to billow. A respite, but in chaos.

Spun round by the wind, tossed by all the thousand motions of the wave, she reflected every mad oscillation of the sea. She scarcely pitched at all, a terrible symptom of a ship's distress. Wrecks merely roll. Pitching is a convulsion of the strife. The helm alone can turn a vessel to the wind.

In storms, and more especially in the meteors of snow, sea and night end by melting into amalgamation, resolving into nothing but smoke. Mists, whirlwinds, gales, motion in all directions, no basis, no shelter, no stop. Constant recommencement, one gulf succeeding another. No horizon visible; intense blackness for background. Through all these the hooker drifted.

To have got free of the Caskets, to have eluded the rock, was a victory for the shipwrecked men; but it was a victory which left them in stupor. They had raised no cheer; at sea such an imprudence is not repeated twice. To throw down a challenge where they could not cast a lead, would have been too serious a jest.

The repulse of the rock was an impossibility achieved. They were petrified by it. By degrees, however, they began to hope again. Such are the insubmergable mirages of the soul! There is no distress so complete but that even in the most critical moments

the inexplicable sunrise of hope is seen in its depths. These poor wretches were ready to acknowledge to themselves that they were saved. It was on their lips.

But suddenly something terrible appeared to them in the darkness.

On the port bow arose, standing stark, cut out on the background of mist, a tall, opaque mass, vertical, right-angled, a tower of the abyss. They watched it open-mouthed.

The storm was driving them towards it.

They knew not what it was. It was the Ortach rock.

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### ORTACH.

THE reef reappeared. After the Caskets comes Ortach. The storm is no artist; brutal and all-powerful, it never varies its appliances. The darkness is inexhaustible. Its snares and perfidies never come to an end. As for man, he soon comes to the bottom of his resources. Man expends his strength, the abyss never.

The shipwrecked men turned towards the chief, their hope. He could only shrug his shoulders. Dismal contempt of helplessness.

A pavement in the midst of the ocean, such is the Ortach rock. The Ortach, all of a piece, rises up in a straight line to eighty feet above the angry beating waves. Waves and ships break against it. An immovable cube, it plunges its rectilinear planes apeak into the numberless serpentine curves of the sea.

At night it stands an enormous block resting on the folds of a huge black sheet. In time of storm it awaits the stroke of the axe, which is the thunder-clap.

But there is never a thunder-clap during the snow-storm. True, the ship has the bandage round her eyes; darkness is knotted about her; she is like one prepared to be led to the scaffold. As for the thunderbolt, which makes quick ending, it is not to be hoped for.

The *Matutina*, nothing better than a log upon the waters, drifted towards this rock, as she had drifted towards the other. The poor wretches on board, who had for a moment believed themselves saved, relapsed into their agony. The destruction they had left behind faced them again. The reef reappeared from the bottom of the sea. Nothing had been gained.



The Caskets are a figuring iron\* with a thousand compartments. The Ortach is a wall. To be wrecked on the Caskets is to be cut into ribbons; to strike on the Ortach is to be crushed into powder.

Nevertheless, there was one chance.

On a straight frontage such as that of the Ortach, neither the wave nor the cannon ball can ricochet. The operation is simple; first the flux, then the reflux; a wave advances, a billow returns.

In such cases the question of life and death is balanced thus: if the wave carries the vessel on the rock, she breaks on it and is lost; if the billow retires before the ship has touched, she is carried back, she is saved.

It was a moment of great anxiety; those on board saw through the gloom the great decisive wave bearing down on them. How far was it going to drag them? If the wave broke upon the ship, they were carried on the rock and dashed to pieces. If it passed under the ship . . . .

The wave *did* pass under.

They breathed again.

But what of the recoil? What would the surf do with them? The surf carried them back. A few minutes later the *Matutina* was free of the breakers. The Ortach faded from their view, as the Caskets had done. It was their second victory. For the second time the hooker had verged on destruction, and had drawn back in time.

## CHAPTER XV.

### PORTENTOSUM MARE.

MEANWHILE a thickening mist had descended on the drifting wretches. They were ignorant of their whereabouts, they could scarcely see a cable's length around. Despite a furious storm of hail which forced them to bend down their heads, the women had obstinately refused to go below again. No one, however hopeless, but wishes, if shipwreck be inevitable, to meet it in the open air. When so near death, a ceiling above one's head seems like the first outline of a coffin.

They were now in a short and chopping sea. A turgid sea indicates its constraint. Even in a fog the entrance into a strait may

\**Gaufrier*, the iron with which a pattern is traced on stuff.

be known by the boiling-like appearance of the waves. And thus it was, for they were unconsciously coasting Aurigny. Between the west of Ortach and the Caskets and the east of Aurigny the sea is hemmed in and cramped, and the uneasy position determines locally the condition of storms. The sea suffers like others, and when it suffers it is irritable. That channel is a thing to fear.

The *Matutina* was in it.

Imagine under the sea a tortoise shell as big as Hyde Park or the Champs Elysées, of which every striature is a shallow, and every embossment a reef. Such is the western approach of Aurigny. The sea covers and conceals this shipwrecking apparatus. On this conglomeration of submarine breakers the cloven waves leap and foam. In calm weather, a chopping sea; in storms a chaos.

The shipwrecked men observed this new complication without endeavoring to explain it to themselves. Suddenly they understood it. A pale vista broadened in the zenith; a wan tinge overspread the sea; the livid light revealed on the port side a long shoal stretching eastward, towards which the power of the rushing wind was driving the vessel. The shoal was Aurigny.

What was that shoal? They shuddered. They would have shuddered even more had a voice answered them—Aurigny.

No isle so well defended against man's approach as Aurigny. Below and above water it is protected by a savage guard, of which Ortach is the outpost. To the west, Burbou, Sauteriaux, Anfroque, Niangle, Fond du Croc, Les Jumelles, La Grosse, La Clanque, Les Eguillons, Le Vrac, La Fosse-Malière; to the east, Sauquet, Hommeau, Floreau, La Brinebets, La Queslingue, Croquelihou, La Fourche, Le Saut, Noire Pute, Coupie, Orbue. These are hydra-monsters of the species reef.

One of these reefs is called Le But, the goal, as if to imply that every voyage ends there.

This obstruction of rocks, simplified by night and sea, appeared to the shipwrecked men in the shape of a single dark band, a sort of black blot on the horizon.

Shipwreck is the ideal of helplessness; to be near land, and unable to reach it; to float, yet not to be able to do so in any desired direction; to rest the foot on what seems firm and is fragile; to be full of life, when o'er-shadowed by death; to be the prisoner of

space; to be walled in between sky and ocean; to have the infinite overhead like a dungeon; to be encompassed by the eluding elements of wind and waves; and to be seized, bound, paralyzed;—such a load of misfortune stupefies and crushes us. We imagine that in it we catch a glimpse of the sneer of the opponent who is beyond our reach. That which holds you fast is that which releases the birds and sets the fishes free. It appears nothing, and is everything. We are dependent on the air which is ruffled by our mouths; we are dependent on the water which we catch in the hollow of our hands. Draw a glassful from the storm, and it is but a cup of bitterness—a mouthful is nausea, a waveful is extermination. The grain of sand in the desert, the foam-flake on the sea, are fearful symptoms. Omnipotence takes no care to hide its atom, it changes weakness into strength, fills naught with all; and it is with the infinitely little that the infinitely great crushes you. It is with its drops the ocean dissolves you. You feel you are a plaything.

A plaything: ghastly epithet!

The *Matutina* was a little above Aurigny, which was not an unfavorable position; but she was drifting towards its northern point, which was fatal. As a bent bow discharges its arrow, the nor'-wester was shooting the vessel towards the northern cape. Off that point, a little beyond the harbour of Corbels, is that which the seamen of the Norman archipelago call a "*singe*."

The "*singe*," or race, is a furious kind of current. A wreath of funnels in the shallows produces in the waves a wreath of whirlpools. You escape one to fall into another. A ship caught hold of by the race, winds round and round, until some sharp rock cleaves her hull; then the shattered vessel stops, her stern rises from the waves, the stem completes the revolution in the abyss, the stern sinks in, and all is sucked down. A circle of foam broadens and floats, and nothing more is seen on the surface of the waves but a few bubbles here and there rising from the smothered breathings below.

The three most dangerous races in the whole Channel are, one close to the well-known Girdler Sands, one at Jersey between Pignonnet and the Point of Noirmont, and the race of Aurigny.

Had a local pilot been on board the *Matu-*

*tina*, he could have warned them of their fresh peril. In place of a pilot, they had their instinct. In situations of extreme danger men are endowed with second sight. High contortions of form were flying along the coast in the frenzied raid of the wind. It was the spitting of the race. Many a bark has been swamped in that snare. Without knowing what awaited them, they approached the spot with horror.

How to double that cape? There were no means of doing it.

Just as they had seen, first the Caskets, then Ortach, rise before them, they now saw the point of Aurigny, all of steep rock. It was like a number of giants, rising up one after another—a series of frightful duels.

Charybdis and Scylla are but two; the Caskets, Ortach, and Aurigny are three.

The phenomenon of the horizon being invaded by the rocks, were thus repeated with the grand monotony of the abyss. The battles of the ocean have the same sublime tautology as the combats of Homer.

Each wave, as they neared it, added twenty cubits to the cape, awfully magnified by the mist; the fast decreasing distance seemed more inevitable—they were touching the skirts of the race! The first fold which seized them would drag them in—another wave surmounted, and all would be over.

Suddenly the hooker was driven back, as by the blow of a Titan's fist. The wave reared up under the vessel and fell back, throwing the waif back in its mane of foam. The *Matutina*, thus impelled, drifted away from Aurigny.

She was again on the open sea.

Whence had come the succor? From the wind. The breath of the storm had changed its direction.

The wave had played with them, now it was the wind's turn. They had saved themselves from the Caskets. Off Ortach it was the wave which had been their friend. Now it was the wind. The wind had suddenly veered from north to south. The sou'-wester had succeeded the nor'-wester.

The current is the wind in the waters; the wind is the current in the air. These two forces had just counteracted each other, and it had been the wind's will to snatch its prey from the current.

The sudden fantasies of ocean are uncertain. They are, perhaps, an embodiment of

the perpetual; when at their mercy man must neither hope nor despair. They do and they undo. The ocean amuses itself. Every shade of wild, untamed ferocity is phased in the vastness of that cunning sea, which Jean Bart used to call the "great brute." To its claws and their gashings succeed soft intervals of velvet paws. Sometimes the storm hurries on a wreck, at others it works out the problem with care; it might almost be said that it caresses it. The sea can afford to take its time, as men in their agonies find out.

We must own that occasionally these lulls of the torture announce deliverance. Such cases are rare. However this may be, men in extreme peril are quick to believe in rescue; the slightest pause in the storm's threats is sufficient; they tell themselves that they are out of danger. After believing themselves buried, they declare their resurrection; they feverishly embrace what they do not yet possess; it is clear that the bad luck has turned; they declare themselves satisfied; they are saved; they cry quits with God. They should not be in so great a hurry to give receipts to the Unknown.

The sou'-wester set in with a whirlwind. Shipwrecked men have never any but rough helpers. The *Matutina* was dragged rapidly out to sea by the remnant of her rigging—like a dead woman trailed by the hair. It was like the enfranchisement granted by Tiberius, at the price of violation. The wind treated with brutality those whom it saved; it rendered service with fury; it was help without pity.

The wreck was breaking up under the severity of its deliverers.

Hailstones, big and hard enough to charge a blunderbuss, smote the vessel; at every rotation of the waves these hailstones rolled about the deck like marbles. The hooker, whose deck was almost flush with the water, was being beaten out of shape by the rolling masses of water and its sheets of spray. On board it each man was for himself.

They clung on as best they could. As each sea swept over them, it was with a sense of surprise they saw that all were still there. Several had their faces torn by splinters.

Happily despair has stout hands. In terror a child's hand has the grasp of a giant. Agony makes a vice of a woman's fingers. A girl in her fright can almost bury her rose-

colored fingers in a piece of iron. With hooked fingers they hung on somehow, as the waves dashed on and passed off them; but every wave brought them the fear of being swept away.

Suddenly they were relieved.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE PROBLEM SUDDENLY WORKS IN SILENCE.

THE hurricane had just stopped short. There was no longer in the air sou'-wester or nor'-wester. The fierce clarions of space were mute. The whole of the waterspout had poured forth from the sky without any warning of diminution as if it had slid perpendicularly into a gulf beneath. None knew what had become of it; flakes replaced the hailstones, the snow began to fall slowly. No more swell: the sea flattened down.

Such sudden cessations are peculiar to snow-storms. The electric effluvium exhausted, all becomes still, even the wave, which in ordinary storms often remains agitated for a long time. In snow-storms it is not so. No prolonged anger in the deep. Like a tired-out worker it becomes drowsy directly, thus almost giving the lie to the laws of statics, but not astonishing old seamen, who know that the sea is full of unforeseen surprises.

The same phenomenon takes place, although very rarely, in ordinary storms. Thus, in our time, on the occasion of the memorable hurricane of July 27th, 1867, at Jersey the wind, after fourteen hour's fury, suddenly relapsed into a deep calm.

In a few minutes the hooker was floating in sleeping waters.

At the same time (for the last phase of these storms resembles the first) they could distinguish nothing; all that had been made visible in the convulsions of the meteoric cloud was again dark. Pale outlines were fused in vague mist, and the gloom of infinite space closed about the vessel. The wall of night—that circular occlusion, that interior of a cylinder the diameter of which was lessening minute by minute—enveloped the *Matutina*, and, with the sinister deliberation of an encroaching iceberg, was drawing in dangerously. In the zenith nothing—a lid of fog closing down. It was as if the hooker were at the bottom of the well of the abyss.

In that well the sea was a puddle of liquid

lead. No stir in the waters—ominous immobility! The ocean is never less tamed than when it is still as a pool.

All was silence, stillness, blindness.

Perchance the silence of inanimate objects is taciturnity.

The last ripples glided along the hull. The deck was horizontal, with an insensible slope to the sides. Some broken planks were shifting about irresolutely. The block on which they had lighted the tow steeped in tar, in place of the signal light which had been swept away, swung no longer at the prow, and no longer let fall burning drops into the sea. What little breeze remained in the clouds was noiseless. The snow fell thickly, softly, and with scarce a slant. No foam of breakers could be heard. The peace of shadows was over all.

This repose succeeding all the past exasperations and paroxysms was, for the poor creatures so long tossed about, an unspeakable comfort. It was as though the punishment of the rack had ceased. They caught a glimpse about them and above them of something which seemed like a consent that they should be saved. They regained confidence. All that had been fury was now tranquillity. It appeared to them a pledge of peace. Their wretched hearts dilated. They were able to let go the end of the rope or beam to which they had clung, to rise, hold themselves up, stand, walk, move about. They felt inexpressibly calmed. There are in the depths of darkness such phases of paradise, preparations for other things. It was clear that they were delivered out of the storm, out of the foam, out of the wind, out of the uproar. Henceforth all the chances were in their favor. In three or four hours it would be sunrise. They would be seen by some passing ship; they would be rescued. The worst was over, they were re-entering life. The important feat was to have been able to keep afloat until the cessation of the tempest. They said to themselves "It is all over this time."

Suddenly they found that all was indeed over.

One of the sailors, the northern Basque, Galdeazun by name, went down into the hold to look for a rope, then came above again and said,—

"The hold is full."

"Of what?" asked the chief.

"Of water," answered the sailor.

The chief cried out,—

"What does that mean?"

"It means," replied Galdeazun, "that in half an hour we shall founder."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE LAST RESOURCE.

THERE was a hole in the keel. A leak had been sprung. When it happened no one could have said. Was it when they touched the Caskets? Was it off Ortach? Was it when they were whirled about the shallows west of Aurigny? It was most probable that they had touched some rock there. They had struck against some hidden buttress which they had not felt in the midst of the convulsive fury of the wind which was tossing them. In tetanus who would feel a prick?

The other sailor, the southern Basque, whose name was Ave Maria, went down into the hold, too, came on deck again, and said,—

"There are two varas of water in the hold."

About six feet.

Ave Maria Added,—*"In less than forty minutes we shall sink."*

Where was the leak? They couldn't find it. It was hidden by the water which was filling up the hold. The vessel had a hole in her hull some where under the water-line, quite forward in the keel. Impossible to find it—impossible to check it. They had a wound which they could not staunch. The water, however, was not rising very fast.

The chief called out,—

"We must work the pump."

Galdeazun replied,—*"We have no pump left."*

"Then," said the chief, "we must make for land."

"Where is the land?"

"I don't know."

"Nor I."

"But it must be somewhere."

"True enough."

"Let some one steer for it."

"We have no pilot."

"Stand to the tiller yourself."

"We have lost the tiller."

"Let's rig one out of the first beam we can lay hands on. Nails—a hammer—quick—some tools."

"The carpenter's box is overboard; we have no tools."

"We'll steer all the same; no matter where."

"The rudder is lost."

"Where is the boat? We'll get in and row."

"The boat is lost."

"We'll row the wreck."

"We have lost the oars."

"We'll sail."

"We have lost the sails, and the mast."

"We'll rig one up with a pole and a tarpaulin for sail. Let's get clear of this and trust in the wind."

"There is no wind."

The wind, indeed, had left them, the storm had fled, and its departure, which they had believed to mean safety, meant, in fact, destruction. Had the sou'-wester continued it might have driven them wildly on some shore, might have beaten the leak in speed—might, perhaps, have carried them to some propitious sandbank, and cast them on it before the hooker foundered. The swiftness of the storm, bearing them away, might have enabled them to reach land; but no more wind, no more hope. They were going to die because the hurricane was over.

The end was near!

Wind, hail, the hurricane, the whirlwind—these are wild combatants that may be overcome; the storm can be taken in the weak point of its armor there are resources against the violence which continually lays itself open, is off its guard, and often hits wide. But nothing is to be done against a calm; it offers nothing to the grasp, of which you can lay hold.

The winds are a charge of Cossacks; stand your ground and they disperse. Calms are the pincers of the executioner.

The water, deliberate and sure, irrepressible and heavy, rose in the hold, and as it rose, the vessel sank—it was happening slowly.

Those on board the wreck of the *Matutina* felt that most hopeless of catastrophes—an inert catastrophe undermining them. The still and sinister certainty of their fate petrified them. No stir in the air, no movement on the sea. The motionless is the inexorable. Absorption was sucking them down silently. Through the depths of the dumb waters—without anger, without passion, not willing, not knowing, not caring—the fatal centre of the globe was attracting them downwards. Horror in repose amalgamated them with

itself. It was no longer the wide open mouth of the sea, the double jaw of the wind and the wave, vicious in its throat, the grin of the waterspout, the foaming appetite of the breakers—it was as if the wretched beings had under them the black yawn of the infinite.

They felt themselves sinking into Death's peaceful depths. The height between the vessel and the water was lessening—that was all. They could calculate her disappearance to the moment. It was the exact reverse of submersion by the rising tide. The water was not rising towards them, they were sinking towards it. They were digging their own grave. Their own weight was their sexton.

They were being executed, not by the law of man, but by the law of things.

The snow was falling, and as the wreck was now motionless, this white lint made a cloth over the deck and covered the vessel as with a winding-sheet.

The hold was becoming fuller and deeper—no means of getting at the leak. They struck a light and fixed three or four torches in holes as best they could. Galdeazun brought some old leathern buckets, and they tried to bale the hold out, standing in a row to pass them from hand to hand, but the buckets were past use, the leather of some was unstitched, there were holes in the bottoms of the others, and the buckets emptied themselves on the way. The difference in quantity between the water which was making its way in and that which they returned to the sea was ludicrous—for a ton that entered a glassful was baled out; they did not improve their condition. It was like the expenditure of a miser, trying to exhaust a million, halfpenny by halfpenny.

The chief said, "Let us lighten the wreck."

During the storm, they had lashed together the chests which were on deck. These remained tied to the stump of the mast. They undid the lashings and rolled the chests overboard through a breach in the gunwale. One of these trunks belonged to the Basque woman, who could not repress a sigh.

"Oh, my new cloak lined with scarlet! Oh, my poor stockings of birchen-bark lace!

Oh, my silver ear-rings to wear at mass on May-day!"





"CAST YOUR CRIMES INTO THE SEA."

The deck cleared, there remained the cabin to be seen to. It was greatly encumbered; in it were, as may be remembered, the luggage belonging to the passengers, and the bales belonging to the sailors. They took the luggage, and threw it over the gunwale. They carried up the bales and cast them into the sea.

Thus they emptied the cabin. The lantern, the cap, the barrels, the sacks, the bales, and the water-butts, the pot of soup, all went over into the waves.

They unscrewed the nuts of the iron stove, long since extinguished: they pulled it out, hoisted it on deck, dragged it to the side, and threw it out of the vessel.

They cast overboard everything they could pull out of the deck—chains, shrouds, and torn rigging.

From time to time the chief took a torch, and throwing its light on the figures painted on the prow to show the draft of water, looked to see how deep the wreck had settled down.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE HIGHEST RESOURCE.

THE wreck being lightened, was sinking more slowly, but none the less surely.

The hopelessness of their situation was without resource—without mitigation; they had exhausted their last expedient.

“Is there anything else we can throw overboard?”

The doctor, whom everyone had forgotten, rose from the companion, and said,

“Yes.”

“What?” asked the chief.

The doctor answered, “Our Crime.”

They shuddered, and all cried out,

“Amen.”

The doctor standing up, pale, raised his hand to heaven, saying,

“Kneel down.”

They wavered—to waver is the preface to kneeling down.

The doctor went on,

“Let us throw our crimes into the sea, they weigh us down; it is they that are sinking the ship. Let us think no more of safety—let us think of salvation. Our last crime, above all, the crime which we committed, or rather completed, just now; oh,

wretched beings who are listening to me, it is that which is overwhelming us. For those who leave intended murder behind them, it is an impious insolence to tempt the abyss. He who sins against a child, sins against God. True, we were obliged to put to sea, but it was certain perdition. The storm, warned by the shadow of our crime, came on. It is well. Regret nothing, however. There, not far off in the darkness, are the sands of Vauville and Cape La Hogue. It is France. There was but one possible shelter for us, which was Spain. France is no less dangerous to us than England. Our deliverance from the sea would have led but to the gibbet. Hanged or drowned—we had no alternative. God has chosen for us; let us give him thanks. He has vouchsafed us the grave which cleanses. Brethren, the inevitable hand is in it. Remember that it was we who just now did our best to send on high that child, and that at this very moment, now as I speak, there is perhaps above our heads, a soul accusing us before a Judge whose eye is on us. Let us make the best use this last respite; let us make an effort, if we still may, to repair, as far as we are able, the evil that we have wrought. If the child survives, let us come to his aid; if he is dead, let us seek his forgiveness. Let us cast our crime from us. Let us ease our consciences of its weight. Let us strive that our souls be not swallowed up before God, for that is the awful shipwreck. Bodies go to the fishes, souls to the devils. Have pity on yourselves. Kneel down, I tell you. Repentance is the bark which never sinks. You have lost your compass! You are wrong! You still have prayer.”

The wolves became lambs—such transformations occur in last agonies; tigers lick the crucifix; when the dark portal opens ajar, belief is difficult, unbelief impossible. However imperfect may be the different sketches of religion essayed by man, even when his belief is shapeless, even when the outline of the dogma is not in harmony with the lineaments of the eternity he foresees, there comes in his last hour a trembling of the soul. There is something which will begin when life is over; this thought impresses the last pang.

A man's dying agony is the expiration of a term. In that fatal second he feels weighing on him a diffused responsibility. That which



has been complicates that which is to be. The past returns and enters into the future. What is known becomes as much an abyss as the unknown. And the two chasms, the one which is full by his faults, the other of his anticipations, mingle their reverberations. It is this confusion of the two gulfs which terrifies the dying man.

They had spent their last grain of hope on the direction of life; hence they turned in the other. Their only remaining chance was in its dark shadow. They understood it. It came on them as a lugubrious flash, followed by a relapse of horror. That which is intelligible to the dying man is as what is perceived in the lightning. Everything, then nothing; you see, then all is blindness. After death the eye will re-open, and that which was a flash will become a sun.

They cried out to the doctor,—

"Thou, thou, there is no one but thee. We will obey thee, what must we do? speak."

The doctor answered,—

"The question is how to pass over the unknown precipice, and reach the other bank of life which is beyond the tomb. Being the one who knows the most, my danger is greater than yours. You do well to leave the choice of the bridge to him whose burthen is the heaviest."

He added,—

"Knowledge is a weight added to conscience."

He continued,

"How much time have we still?"

Galdezun looked at the watermark, and answered,—

"A little more than a quarter of an hour."

"Good," said the doctor.

The low hood of the companion on which he lent his elbows made a sort of table; the doctor took from his pocket his inkhorn and pen, and his pocket-book out of which he drew a parchment, the same one on the back of which he had written, a few hours before, some twenty cramped and crooked lines.

"A light," he said.

The snow, falling like the spray of a cataract, had extinguished the torches one after another; there was but one left. Ave Maria took it out of the place where it had been stuck, and holding it in his hand, came and stood by the doctor's side.

The doctor replaced his pocket-book in his pocket, put down the pen and inkhorn

on the hood of the companion, unfolded the parchment and said,—

"Listen."

Then in the midst of the sea, on the failing bridge (a sort of shuddering flooring of the tomb), the doctor began a solemn reading to which all the shadows seemed to listen. The doomed men bowed their heads around him. The flaming of the torch intensified their pallor. What the doctor read was written in English. Now and then, when one of those woe-begone looks seemed to ask an explanation, the doctor would stop, to repeat—whether in French, or Spanish, Basque, or Italian—the passage he had just read. Stifled sobs and hollow beatings of the breast were heard. The wreck was sinking more and more.

The reading over, the doctor placed the parchment flat on the companion, seized his pen, and on a clear margin which he had carefully left at the bottom of what he had written, he signed himself, GERNADUS GEESTEMUNDE: Doctor.

Then, turning towards the others, he said,—

"Come, and sign."

The Basque woman approached, took the pen, and signed herself, ASUNCION.

She handed the pen to the Irish woman, who, not knowing how to write, made a cross.

The doctor, by the side of this cross, wrote, BARBARA FERMOY, of *Tyrrif Island, in the Hebrides*.

Then he handed the pen to the chief of the band.

The chief signed, GAIZDORRA: *Captal*.

The Genoese signed himself under the chief's name, GIANGIRATE.

The Languedocian signed, JACQUES QUARTOURZE: *alias, the Narbonnais*.

The Provençal signed, LUC-PIERRE CAPGAROUPE, of the *Galley of Mahon*.

Under these signatures the doctor added a note:—

"Of the crew of three men, the skipper having been washed overboard by a sea, but two remain, and they have signed."

The two sailors affixed their names underneath the note. The northern Basque signed himself, GALDEAZUN.

The southern Basque signed, AVE MARIA. *Robber*.

Then the doctor said,—

"Capgaroupe."

"Here," said the Provençal.

"Have you Hardquanonne's flask?"

"Yes."

"Give it me."

Capgaroupe drank off the last mouthful of brandy, and handed the flask to the doctor.

The water was rising in the hold; the wreck was sinking deeper and deeper into the sea. The sloping edges of the ship were covered by a thin gnawing wave, which was rising. All were crowded on the centre of the deck.

The doctor dried the ink on the signatures by the heat of the torch, and folding the parchment into a narrower compass than the diameter of the neck, put it into the flask. He called for the cork.

"I don't know where it is," said Capgaroupe.

"Here is a piece of rope," said Jacques Quartourze.

The doctor corked the flask with a bit of rope, and asked for some tar. Galdeazun went forward, extinguished the signal light with a piece of tow, took the vessel in which it was contained from the stern, and brought it, half full of burning tar, to the doctor.

The flask holding the parchment which they had all signed, was corked and tarred over.

"It is done," said the doctor.

And from out all their mouths, vaguely stammered in every language, came the dismal utterances of the catacombs.

"Ainsi soit-il!"

"Mea culpá!"

"Asi sea!"

"Aro raï!"

"Amen!"

It was as though the sombre voices of Babel were scattered through the shadows as Heaven uttered its awful refusal to hear them.

The doctor turned away from his companions in crime and distress, and took a few steps towards the gunwale. Reaching the side, he looked into space, and said, in a deep voice,—

"Bist du bei mir?" \*

Perchance he was addressing some phantom.

The wreck was sinking.

Behind the doctor all the others were in a

dream. Prayer mastered them by main force. They did not bow, they were bent. There was something involuntary in their contrition; they wavered as a sail flaps when the breeze fails. And the haggard group took by degrees, with clasping of hands and prostration of foreheads, attitudes various, yet of humiliation. Some strange reflection of the deep seemed to soften their villainous features.

The doctor returned towards them. Whatever had been his past, the old man was great in the presence of the catastrophe.

The deep reserve of nature which enveloped him preoccupied without disconcerting him. He was not one to be taken unawares. Over him was the calm of a silent horror: on his countenance the majesty of God's will comprehended.

This old and thoughtful outlaw unconsciously assumed the air of a pontiff.

He said,—

"Attend to me."

He contemplated for a moment the waste of water, and added,—

"Now we are going to die."

Then he took the torch from the hands of Ave Maria, and waved it.

A spark broke from it and flew into the night.

"Then the doctor cast the torch into the sea.

The torch was extinguished: all light disappeared. Nothing left but the huge, unfathomable shadow. It was like the filling up of the grave.

In the darkness, the doctor was heard saying,—

"Let us pray."

All knelt down.

It was no longer on the snow, but in the water, that they knelt.

They had but a few minutes more.

The doctor alone remained standing.

The flakes of snow falling on him had sprinkled him with white tears, and made him visible on the background of darkness. He might have been the speaking statue of the shadow.

The doctor made the sign of the cross and raised his voice, while beneath his feet he felt that almost imperceptible oscillation which prefaces the moment in which a wreck is about to founder. He said,—

"Pater noster qui es in cœlis."

\* Art thou near me?

The Provençal repeated in French,—

“Notre Père qui êtes aux cieux.”

The Irishwoman repeated in Gaelic, understood by the Basque woman,—

“Ar nathair ata ar neamh.”

The doctor continued,—

“Sactificetur nomen tuum.”

“Que votre nom soit sanctifié,” said the Provençal.

“Naomhthar hainm,” said the Irishwoman.

“Adveniat regnum tuum,” continued the doctor.

“Que votre règne arrive,” said the Provençal.

“Tigcadh do rioghachd,” said the Irishwoman.

As they knelt, the waters had risen to their shoulders. The doctor went on,—

“Fiat voluntas tua.”

“Que votre volonté soit faite,” stammered the Provençal.

And the Irishwoman and Basque woman cried,—

“Deuntar do thoil ar an Hhalàmb.”

“Sicut in cœlo, sicut in terra,” said the doctor.

No voice answered him.

He looked down. All their heads were under water. They had let themselves be drowned on their knees.

The doctor took in his right hand the flask which he had placed on the companion, and raised it above his head.

The wreck was going down. As he sank, the doctor murmured the rest of the prayer.

For an instant his shoulders were above water, then his head, then nothing remained but his arm holding up the flask, as if he were showing it to the Infinite.

His arm disappeared; there was no greater fold on the deep sea than there would have been on a tun of oil. The snow continued falling.

One thing floated, and was carried by the waves into the darkness. It was the tarred flask, kept afloat by its osier cover.

## BOOK THE THIRD.

### THE CHILD IN THE SHADOW.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### CHESIL.

THE storm was no less severe on land than on sea. The same wild enfranchisement of the elements had taken place around the abandoned child. The weak and innocent become their sport in the expenditure of the unreasoning rage of their blind forces. Shadows discern not, and things inanimate have not the clemency they are supposed to possess.

On the land there was but little wind. There was an inexplicable dumbness in the cold. There was no hail. The thickness of the falling snow was fearful.

Hailstones strike, harass, bruise, stun, crush. Snow-flakes do worse: soft and inexorable, the snow-flake does its work in silence, touch it, and it melts. It is pure, even as the hypocrite is candid. It is by white particles slowly heaped upon each other that the flake becomes an avalanche and the knave a criminal.

The child continued to advance into the mist. The fog presents but a soft obstacle; hence its danger. It yields, and yet persists. Mist, like snow, is full of treachery. The child, strange wrestler at war with all these risks, had succeeded in reaching the bottom of the descent, and had gained Chesil. Without knowing it he was on an isthmus, with the ocean on each side; so that he could not lose his way in the fog, in the snow, or in the darkness, without falling into the deep waters of the gulf on the right hand, or into the raging billows of the high sea on the left. He was travelling on, in ignorance, between these two abysses.

The Isthmus of Portland was at this period singularly sharp and rugged. Nothing remains at this date of its past configuration. Since the idea of manufacturing Portland stone into Roman cement was first seized, the whole rock has been subjected to an alteration which has completely changed its original appearance. Calcareous lias, slate, and trap, are still to be found there, rising from layers of conglomerate, like teeth from a gum; but the pickaxe has broken up and levelled those

bristling, rugged peaks which were once the fearful perches of the ossifrage. The summits exist no longer where the labbes and the skua gulls used to flock together, soaring, like the envious, to sully high places. In vain might you seek the tall monolith called Godolphin, an old British word, signifying "white eagle." In summer you may still gather on those surfaces, pierced and perforated like a sponge, rosemary, pennyroyal, wild hyssop, and sea-fennel which when infused makes a good cordial, and that herb full of knots, which grows in the sand and from which they make matting; but you no longer find grey amber or black tin, or that triple species of slate—one sort green, one blue, and the third the color of sage-leaves. The foxes, the badgers, the otters, and the martens have taken themselves off; on the cliffs of Portland, as well as at the extremity of Cornwall, where there were at one time chamois, none remain. They still fish in some inlets for plaice and pilchards; but the scared salmon no longer ascend the Wey, between Michaelmas and Christmas, to spawn. No more are seen there, as during the reign of Elizabeth, those old unknown birds as large as hawks, who could cut an apple in two, but ate only the pips. You never meet those crows with yellow beaks, called Cornish choughs in English, *pyrrocorax* in Latin, who, in their mischief, would drop burning twigs on thatched roofs. Nor that magic bird, the fulmar, a wanderer from the Scottish archipelago, dropping from his bill an oil which the islanders used to burn in their lamps. Nor do you ever find in the evening, in the plash of the ebbing tide, that ancient, legendary neitse, with the feet of a hog and the bleat of a calf. The tide no longer throws up the whiskered seal, with its curled ears and sharp jaws, dragging itself along on its nailless paws. On that Portland—now-a-days so changed as scarcely to be recognized—the absence of forests precluded nightingales; but now the falcon, the swan, and the wild goose have fled. The sheep of Portland, now-a-days, are fat and have fine wool; the few scattered ewes which nibbled the salt grass there two centuries ago, were small and tough and coarse in the fleece, as became Celtic flocks brought there by garlic-eating shepherds, who lived to a hundred, and who, at the distance of half a mile, could pierce a cuirass with their yard-long arrows. Uncultivated land makes coarse wool. The

Chesil of to-day resembles in no particular the Chesil of the past, so much has it been disturbed by man and by those furious winds which gnaw the very stones.

At present this tongue of land bears a railway, terminating in a pretty square of houses, called Chesilton, and there is a Portland station. Railway carriages roll where seals used to crawl.

The Isthmus of Portland two hundred years ago was a back of sand, with a vertebral spine of rock.

The child's danger changed its form. What he had had to fear in the descent was falling to the bottom of the precipice; in the isthmus, it was falling into the holes. After dealing with the precipice, he must deal with the pitfalls. Everything on the seashore is a trap—the rock is slippery, the strand is quicksand. Resting-places are but snares. It is walking on ice which may suddenly crack and yawn with a fissure, through which you disappear. The ocean has false stages below, like a well-arranged theatre.

The long backbone of granite, from which fall away both slopes of the isthmus, is awkward of access. It is difficult to find there what, in scene-shifters' language, are termed *practicables*. Man has no hospitality to hope for from the ocean; from the rock no more than from the wave. The sea is provident for the bird and the fish alone. Isthmuses are especially naked and rugged; the wave which wears and mines them on either side, reduces them to the simplest form. Everywhere there were sharp relief ridges, cuttings frightful fragments of torn stone, yawning with many points, like the jaws of a shark; break-necks of wet moss, rapid slopes of rock ending in the sea. Whosoever undertakes to pass over an isthmus meets at every step mishappen blocks, as large as houses, in the forms of shin-bones, shoulder-blades, and thigh-bones, the hideous anatomy of dismembered rocks. It is not without reason that these *stræ* of the seashore are called *côtes*.\*

The wayfarer must get out as he best can from the confusion of these ruins. It is like journeying over the bones of an enormous skeleton.

Put a child to this labor of Hercules.

Broad daylight might have aided him. It

\* Côtes, coasts, costa, ribs.

was night. A guide was necessary. He was alone. All the vigor of manhood would not have been too much. He had but the feeble strength of a child. In default of a guide, a footpath might have aided him; there was none.

By instinct he avoided the sharp ridge of the rocks, and kept to the strand as much as possible. It was there that he met with the pitfalls. They were multiplied before him under three forms: the pitfall of water, the pitfall of snow, and the pitfall of sand. This last is the most dangerous of all, because the most illusory. To know the peril we face is alarming; to be ignorant of it, is terrible. The child was fighting against unknown dangers. He was groping his way through something which might, perhaps, be the grave.

He did not hesitate. He went round the rocks, avoided the crevices, guessed at the pitfalls, obeyed the twistings and turnings caused by such obstacles; yet he went on. Though unable to advance in a straight line, he walked with a firm step. When necessary, he drew back with energy. He knew how to tear himself in time from the horrid birdlime of the quicksands. He shook the snow from about him. He entered the water more than once up to the knees. Directly that he left it, his wet knees were frozen by the intense cold of the night. He walked rapidly in his stiffened garments; yet he took care to keep his sailor's coat dry and warm on his chest. He was still tormented by hunger.

The chances of the abyss are illimitable. Everything is possible in it, even salvation. The issue may be found, though it be invisible. How the child, wrapped in a smothering winding-sheet of snow, lost on a narrow elevation between two jaws of an abyss, managed to cross the isthmus is what he could not himself have explained. He had slipped, climbed, rolled, searched, walked, persevered, that is all. Such is the secret of all triumphs. At the end of somewhat less than half-an-hour he felt that the ground was rising. He had reached the other shore. Leaving Chesil, he had gained *terra firma*.

The bridge which now unites Sandford Castle with Smallmouth Sands did not then exist. It is probable that in his intelligent groping he had reascended as far as Wyke

Regis, where there was then a tongue of sand, a natural road crossing East Fleet.

He was saved from the isthmus; but he found himself again face to face with the tempest, with the cold, with the night.

Before him once more lay the plain, shapeless in the density of impenetrable shadow. He examined the ground, seeking a footpath. Suddenly he bent down. He had discovered, in the snow, something which seemed to him a track.

It was indeed a track—the print of a foot. The print was cut out clearly in the whiteness of the snow, which rendered it distinctly visible. He examined it. It was a naked foot; too small for that of a man, too large for that of a child.

It was probably the foot of a woman. Beyond that mark was another, then another, then another. The footprints followed each other at the distance of a step, and struck across the plain to the right. They were still fresh, and slightly covered with little snow. A woman had just passed that way.

This woman was walking in the direction in which the child had seen the smoke. With his eyes fixed on the footprints, he set himself to follow them.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE EFFECT OF SNOW.

He journeyed some time along this course. Unfortunately the footprints were becoming less and less distinct. Dense and fearful was the falling of the snow. It was the time when the hooker was so distressed by the snow-storm at sea.

The child, in distress like the vessel, but after another fashion, had, in the inextricable intersection of shadows which rose up before him, no resource but the footsteps in the snow, and he held to it as the thread of the labyrinth.

Suddenly, whether the snow had filled them up or for some other reason, the footsteps ceased. All becomes even, level, smooth, without a stain, without a detail. There was now nothing but a white cloth drawn over the earth and a black one over the sky. It seemed as if the foot-passenger had flown away. The child, in despair, bent down and searched; but in vain.

As he arose he had a sensation of hearing

some indistinct sound, but he could not be sure of it. It resembled a voice, a breath, a shadow. It was more human than animal; more sepulchral than living. It was a sound, but the sound of a dream.

He looked, but saw nothing.

Solitude, wide, naked and livid, was before him. He listened. That which he had thought he heard had faded away. Perhaps it had been but fancy. He still listened. All was silent.

There was illusion in the mist.

He went on his way again. He walked forward at random, with nothing thenceforth to guide him.

As he moved away the noise began again. This time he could doubt it no longer. It was a groan, almost a sob.

He turned. He searched the darkness of space with his eyes. He saw nothing. The sound arose once more. If limbo could cry out, it would cry in such a tone.

Nothing so penetrating, so piercing, so feeble as the voice—for it was a voice. It arose from a soul. There was palpitation in the murmur. Nevertheless, it seemed uttered almost unconsciously. It was an appeal of suffering, not knowing that it suffered or that it appealed.

The cry,—perhaps a first breath, perhaps a last sigh,—was equally distant from the rattle which closes life and the wail with which it commences. It breathed, it was stifled, it wept, a gloomy supplication from the depths of night. The child fixed his attention everywhere, far near, on high, below. There was no one. There was nothing. He listened. The voice arose again. He perceived it distinctly. The sound somewhat resembled the bleating of a lamb.

Then he was frightened, and thought of flight.

The groan again. This was the fourth time. It was strangely miserable and plaintive. One felt that after that last effort, more mechanical than voluntary, the cry would probably be extinguished. It was an expiring exclamation, instinctively appealing to the amount of aid held in suspense in space. It was some muttering of agony, addressed to a possible Providence.

The child approached in the direction from whence the sound came.

Still he saw nothing.

He advanced again, watchfully.

The complaint continued. Inarticulate and confused as it was, it had become clear—almost vibrating. The child was near the voice; but where was it?

He was close to a complaint. The trembling of a cry passed by his side into space. A human moan floated away into the darkness. This was what he had met. Such at least was his impression, dim as the dense mist in which he was lost.

Whilst he hesitated between an instinct which urged him to fly, and an instinct which commanded him to remain, he perceived in the snow at his feet, a few steps before him, a sort of undulation of the dimensions of a human body—a little eminence, low, long and narrow, like the mould over a grave—a sepulchre in a white churchyard.

At the same time the voice cried out. It was from beneath the undulation that it proceeded. The child bent down, crouching before the undulation, and with both his hands began to clear away.

Beneath the snow which he removed a form grew under his hands: and suddenly in the hollow he had made, there appeared a pale face.

The cry had not proceeded from that face. Its eyes were shut, and the mouth open but full of snow.

It remained motionless; it stirred not under the hands of the child. The child whose fingers were numbed with frost, shuddered when he touched its coldness. It was that of a woman. Her dishevelled hair was mingled with the snow. The woman was dead.

Again the child set himself to clean away the snow. The neck of the dead woman appeared; then her shoulders, clothed in rags. Suddenly he felt something move feebly under his touch. It was something small that was buried, and which stirred. The child swiftly cleared away the snow, discovering a wretched little body—thin, wan, with cold, still alive, lying naked on the dead woman's naked breast.

It was a little girl.

It had been swaddled up, but in rags so scanty that in its struggles it had freed itself from its tatters. Under it, its attenuated limbs, and above it, its breath, had somewhat melted the snow. A nurse would have said it was five or six months old, but perhaps it might be a year, for growth, in poverty, suffers heartbreaking reductions which some-

times even produce rachitis. When its face was exposed to the air, it gave a cry, the continuation of its sob of distress. For the mother not to have heard that sob, proved her irrevocably dead.

The child took the infant in his arms. The stiffened body of the mother was a fearful sight; a spectral light proceeded from her face. The mouth, apart and without breath, seemed to form in the indistinct language of shadows her answer to the questions put to the dead by the Invisible. The ghastly reflection of the icy plains was on that countenance. There was the youthful forehead under the brown hair, the almost indignant knitting of the eyebrows, the pinched nostrils, the closed eyelids, the lashes glued together by the rime, and from the corners of the eyes to the corners of the mouth, a deep channel of tears. The snow lighted up the corpse. Winter and the tomb are not adverse. The corpse is the icicle of man. The nakedness of her breasts was pathetic. They had fulfilled their purpose. On them was a sublime blight of the life infused into one being by another from whom life has fled, and maternal majesty was there instead of virginal purity. At the point of one of the nipples was a white pearl. It was a drop of milk frozen.

Let us explain at once. On the plains over which the deserted boy was passing in his turn, a beggar woman, nursing her infant and searching for a refuge, had lost her way a few hours before. Benumbed with cold she had sunk under the tempest, and could not rise again. The falling snow had covered her. So long as she was able she had clasped her little girl to her bosom, and thus died.

The infant had tried to suck the marble breast. Blind trust, inspired by nature, for it seems that it is possible for a woman to suckle her child even after her last sigh.

But the lips of the infant had been unable to find the breast, where the drop of milk, stolen by death, had frozen, whilst under the snow the child, more accustomed to the cradle than the tomb, had wailed.

The deserted child had heard the cry of the dying child.

He disinterred it.

He took it in his arms.

When she felt herself in his arms she ceased crying. The faces of the two children touched each other, and the purple lips

of the infant sought the cheek of the boy, as it had been a breast. The little girl had nearly reached the moment when the congealed blood stops the action of the heart. Her mother had touched her with the chill of her own death—a corpse communicates death; its numbness is infectious. Her feet, hands, arms, knees, seemed paralyzed by cold. The boy felt the terrible chill. He had on him a garment dry and warm—his pilot jacket. He placed the infant on the breast of the corpse, took off his jacket, wrapped the infant in it, took it up again in his arms, and now, almost naked, under the blast of the north wind which covered him with eddies of snow-flakes, carrying the infant, he pursued his journey.

The little one having succeeded in finding the boy's cheek, again applied her lips to it, and, soothed by the warmth, she slept. First kiss of those two souls in the darkness.

The mother lay there, her back to the snow, her face to the night; but perhaps at the moment when the little boy stripped himself to clothe the little girl, the mother saw him from the depths of infinity.

### CHAPTER III.

#### A BURDEN MAKES A ROUGH ROAD ROUGHER.

It was little more than four hours since the hooker had sailed from the creek of Portland, leaving the boy on the shore. During the long hours since he had been deserted, and had been journeying onwards, he had met but three persons of that human society into which he was, perchance, about to enter. A man—the man on the hill—a woman—the woman in the snow—and the little girl whom he was carrying in his arms.

He was exhausted by fatigue and hunger, yet advanced more resolutely than ever, with less strength and an added burden. He was now almost naked. The few rags which remained to him, hardened by the frost, were sharp as glass, and cut his skin. He became colder, but the infant was warmer. That which he lost was not thrown away, but was gained by her. He found out that the poor infant enjoyed the comfort which was to her the renewal of life. He continued to advance.

From time to time, still holding her securely, he bent down, and taking a handful

of snow he rubbed his feet with it, to prevent their being frost-bitten. At other times, his throat feeling as if it were on fire, he put a little snow in his mouth and sucked it; this for a moment assuaged his thirst, but changed it into fever—a relief which was an aggravation.

The storm had become shapeless from its violence. Deluges of snow are possible. This was one. The paroxysm scourged the shore at the same time that it up-tore the depths of ocean. This was, perhaps, the moment when the distracted hooker was going to pieces in the battle of the breakers.

He travelled under this north wind, still towards the east, over wide surfaces of snow. He knew not how the hours had passed. For a long time he had ceased to see the smoke. Such indications are soon effaced in the night; besides, it was past the hour when fires are put out. Or he had, perhaps, made a mistake, and it was possible that neither town nor village existed in the direction in which he was travelling. Doubting, he yet persevered.

Two or three times the little infant cried. Then he adopted in his gait a rocking movement, and the child was soothed and silenced. She ended by falling into a sound sleep. Shivering himself, he felt her warm. He frequently tightened the folds of the jacket round the babe's neck, so that the frost should not get in through any opening, and that no melted snow should drop between the garment and the child.

The plain was unequal. In the declivities into which it sloped, the snow, driven by the wind into the dips of the ground, was so deep, in comparison with a child so small, that it almost engulfed him, and he had to struggle through it, half buried. He walked on, working away the snow with his knees.

Having cleared the ravine, he reached the high lands swept by the winds, where the snow lay thin. Then he found the surface a sheet of ice. The little girl's lukewarm breath, playing on his face, warmed it for a moment, then lingered, and froze in his hair, stiffening it into icicles.

He felt the approach of another danger. He could not afford to fall. He knew that if he did so, he should never rise again. He was overcome by fatigue, and the weight of the darkness would, as with the dead woman, have held him to the ground, and the ice glued him alive to the earth.

He had tripped upon the slopes of precipices, and had recovered himself; he had stumbled into holes, and had got out again. Thenceforward the slightest fall would be death; a false step opened for him a tomb. He must not slip. He had not strength to rise even to his knees. Now everything was slippery; everywhere there was rime and frozen snow. The little creature whom he carried made his progress fearfully difficult. She was not only a burden, which his weariness and exhaustion made excessive, but was also an embarrassment. She occupied both his arms; and, to him who walks over ice, both arms are a natural and necessary balancing power.

He was obliged to do without this balance.

He did without it, and advanced, bending under his burden, not knowing what would become of him.

This little infant was the drop causing the cup of distress to overflow.

He advanced, reeling at every step, as if on a spring-board, and accomplishing, without spectators, miracles of equilibrium. Let us repeat that he was, perhaps, followed on this path of pain by eyes unsleeping in the distances of the shadows—the eyes of the mother and the eyes of God. He staggered, slipped, recovered himself, took care of the infant, and, gathering the jacket about her, he covered up her head; staggered again, advanced—slipped—then drew himself up. The cowardly wind drove against him. Apparently, he made much more way than was necessary. He was, to all appearance, on the plains where Bingleaves Farm was afterwards established, between what are now called Spring Gardens and the Parsonage House. Homesteads and cottages occupy the place of waste lands. Sometimes less than a century separates a steppe from a city.

Suddenly, a lull having occurred in the icy blast which was blinding him, he perceived, at a short distance in front of him, a cluster of gables and of chimneys shown in relief by the snow. The reverse of a silhouette—a city painted in white on a black horizon, something like what we call nowadays a negative proof. Roofs—dwellings—shelter! He had arrived somewhere at last. He felt the ineffable encouragement of hope. The watch of a ship which has wandered from her course feels some such emotion when he cries, "Land ho!"



He hurried his steps.

At length, then, he was near mankind. He would soon be amidst living creatures. There was no longer anything to fear. There glowed within him that sudden warmth—security; that out of which he was emerging was over; thenceforward there would no longer be night, nor winter, nor tempest. It seemed to him that he had left all evil chances behind him. The infant was no longer a burden. He almost ran.

His eyes were fixed on the roofs. There was life there. He never took his eyes off them. A dead man might gaze thus on what might appear through the half-opened lid of his sepulchre. There were the chimneys of which he had seen the smoke.

No smoke arose from them now. He was not long before he reached the houses. He came to the outskirts of a town—an open street. At that period bars to streets were falling into disuse.

The street began by two houses. In those two houses neither candle nor lamp was to be seen; nor in the whole street; nor in the whole town as far as eye could reach. The house to the right was a roof rather than a house—nothing could be more mean. The walls were of mud, the roof was of straw, and there was more thatch than wall. A large nettle, springing from the bottom of the wall, reached the roof. The hovel had but one door, which was like that of a dog-kennel; and a window, which was but a hole. All was shut up. At the side an inhabited pig-stye told that the house was also inhabited.

The house on the left was large, high, built entirely of stone, with a slated roof. It was also closed. It was the rich man's home, opposite to that of the pauper.

The boy did not hesitate. He approached the great mansion. The double folding-door of massive oak, studded with large nails, was of the kind that leads one to expect that behind it there is a stout armory of bolts and locks. An iron knocker was attached to it. He raised the knocker with some difficulty, for his benumbed hands were stumps rather than hands. He knocked once.

No answer.

He struck again; and two knocks.

No movement was heard in the house.

He knocked a third time.

There was no sound. He saw that they

were all asleep, and did not care to get up.

Then he turned to the hovel. He picked up a pebble from the snow, and knocked against the low door.

There was no answer.

He raised himself on tiptoe, and knocked with his pebble against the pane too softly to break the glass, but loud enough to be heard.

No voice was heard; no step moved; no candle was lighted.

He saw that there, as well, they did not care to awake.

The house of stone and the thatched hovel were equally deaf to the wretched.

The boy decided on pushing on further, and penetrating the strait of houses which stretched away in front of him, so dark that it seemed more like a gulf between two cliffs than the entrance to a town.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### ANOTHER FORM OF DESERT.

It was Weymouth which he had just entered. Weymouth then was not the respectable and fine Weymouth of to-day.

Ancient Weymouth did not present, like the present one, an irreproachable rectangular quay, with an inn and a statue in honor of George III. This resulted from the fact George III. had not yet been born. For the same reason, they had not yet designed on the slope of the green hill towards the east, fashioned flat on the soil by cutting away the turf and leaving the bare chalk to the view, the white horse, an acre long, bearing the king upon his back, and always turning, in honor of George III., his tail to the city. These honors, however, were deserved. George III., having lost in his old age the intellect he had never possessed in his youth, was not responsible for the calamities of his reign. He was an innocent. Why not erect statues to him?

Weymouth, a hundred and eighty years ago, was about as symmetrical as a game of spillikins in confusion. In legends it is said that Astaroth travelled over the world, carrying on her back a wallet which contained everything, even good women in their houses. A pell-mell of sheds thrown from her devil's bag would give an idea of that irregular Weymouth—the good women in the sheds

included. The Music Hall remains as a specimen of those buildings; a confusion of wooden dens, carved and eaten by worms (which carve in another fashion)—shapeless, overhanging buildings, some with pillars, leaning one against the other for support against the sea wind and leaving between them awkward spaces of narrow and winding channels, lanes, and passages, often flooded by the equinoctial tides. A heap of old grandmother houses, crowded round a grandfather church, such was Weymouth; a sort of old Norman village thrown up on the coast of England.

The traveller who entered the tavern, now replaced by the hotel, instead of paying royally his twenty-five francs for a fried sole and a bottle of wine, had to suffer the humiliation of eating a pennyworth of soup made of fish,—which soup, by the bye, was very good. Wretched fare!

The deserted child, carrying the foundling passed through the first street, then the second, then the third. He raised his eyes, seeking in the higher stories and in the roofs a lighted window-pane, but all were closed and dark. At intervals he knocked at the doors. No one answered. Nothing makes the heart so like a stone as being warm between sheets. The noise and the shaking had at length awakened the infant. He knew this because he felt her suck his cheek. She did not cry, believing him her mother.

He was about to turn and wander long, perhaps, in the intersections of the Scrambridge lanes, where there were then more cultivated plots than dwellings, more thorn hedges than houses; but fortunately he struck into a passage which exists to this day near Trinity schools. This passage led him to a water-brink, where there was a roughly built quay with a parapet, and to the right he made out a bridge. It was the bridge over the Wey, connecting Weymouth with Melcombe Regis, and under the arches of which the Backwater joins the harbor.

Weymouth, a hamlet, was then a suburb of Melcombe Regis, a city and port. Now Melcombe Regis is a parish of Weymouth. The village has absorbed the city. It was the bridge which did the work. Bridges are strange vehicles of suction, which inhale the population, and sometimes swell one river-bank at the expense of its opposite neighbor.

The boy went to the bridge, which at that

period was a covered timber structure. He crossed it. Thanks to its roofing, there was no snow on the planks. His bare feet had a moment's comfort as they crossed them. Having passed over the bridge he was in Melcombe Regis. There were fewer wooden houses than stone ones, there. He was no longer in the village, he was in the city.

The bridge opened on a rather fine street, called St. Thomas's Street. He entered it. Here and there were high carved gables and shop-fronts. He set to knocking at the doors again; he had no strength left to call or shout.

At Melcombe Regis, as at Weymouth, no one was stirring. The doors were all carefully double-locked. The windows were covered by their shutters, as the eyes by their lids. Every precaution had been taken to avoid being aroused by disagreeable surprises. The little wanderer was suffering the indefinable depression made by a sleeping town. Its silence, as of a paralyzed ant's nest, makes the head swim. All its lethargies mingle their nightmares, its slumbers are a crowd, and from its human bodies lying prone, there arises a vapor of dreams. Sleep has gloomy associates beyond this life; the decomposed thoughts of the sleepers float above them in a mist which is both of death and of life, and combine with the Possible, which has also, perhaps, the power of thought as it floats in space. Hence arise entanglements. Dreams, those clouds, interpose their folds and their transparencies over that star, the mind. Above those closed eyelids, where vision has taken the place of sight, a sepulchral disintegration of outlines and appearances dilates itself into impalpability. Mysterious, diffused existences amalgamate themselves with life on that border of death, which sleep is. Those larvæ and souls mingle in the air. Even he who sleeps not, feels a medium press upon him full of sinister life. The surrounding chimera, in which he suspects a reality, impedes him. The waking man, wending his way amidst the sleep phantoms of others, unconsciously pushes back passing shadows, has, or imagines that he has, a vague fear of adverse contact with the invisible, and feels at every moment the obscure pressure of a hostile encounter, which immediately dissolves. There is something of the effect of a forest in the nocturnal diffusion of dreams,

This is what is called being afraid without reason.

What a man feels, a child feels still more.

The uneasiness of nocturnal fear, increased by the spectral houses, increased the weight of the sad burden under which he was struggling.

He entered Conycar Lane, and perceived at the end of that passage the Backwater, which he took for the ocean. He no longer knew in what direction the sea lay. He retraced his steps, struck to the left by Maiden Street, and returned as far as St. Alban's Row.

There by chance and without selection, he knocked violently at any house that he happened to pass. His blows, on which he was expending his last energies, were jerky and without aim; now ceasing altogether for a time, now renewed as if in irritation. It was the violence of his fever striking against the doors.

One voice answered.

That of Time,

Three o'clock tolled slowly behind him from the old belfry of St. Nicholas'.

Then all sank into silence again.

That no inhabitant should have opened a lattice may appear surprising. Nevertheless that silence is in a great measure to be explained. We must remember that in January, 1790, they were just over a somewhat severe outbreak of the plague in London, and that the fear of receiving sick vagabonds caused a diminution of hospitality everywhere. People would not even open their windows for fear of inhaling the poison.

The child felt the coldness of men more terribly than the coldness of night. The coldness of men is intentional. He felt a tightening on his sinking heart which he had not known on the open plains. Now he had entered into the midst of life, and remained alone. This was the summit of misery. The pitiless desert he had understood; the unrelenting town was too much to bear.

The hour, the strokes of which he had just counted, had been another blow. Nothing is so freezing in certain situations as the voice of the hour. It is a declaration of indifference. It is Eternity saying, "What does it matter to me?"

He stopped, and it is not certain that, in that miserable minute, he did not ask himself whether it would not be easier to lie down there and die. However, the little infant

leaned her head against his shoulder and fell asleep again.

This blind confidence set him onwards again. He whom all supports were failing felt that he was himself a basis of support. Irresistible summons of duty!

Neither such ideas nor such a situation belonged to his age. It is probable that he did not understand them. It was a matter of instinct. He did what he chanced to do.

He set out again in the direction of Johnstone Row. But now he no longer walked; he dragged himself along. He left St. Mary's Street to the left, made zigzags through lanes, and at the end of a winding passage found himself in a rather wide, open space. It was a piece of waste land not built upon; probably the spot where Chesterfield Place now stands. The houses ended there. He perceived the sea to the right, and scarcely anything more of the town to his left.

What was to become of him? Here was the country again. To the east great inclined plains of snow marked out the wide slopes of Radipole. Should he continue this journey? Should he advance and re-enter the solitudes? Should he return and re-enter the streets? What was he to do between these two silences—the mute plain and the deaf city? Which of the two refusals should he choose?

There is the anchor of mercy. There is also the look of piteousness. It was that look which the poor little despairing wanderer threw around him.

All at once he heard a menace.

## CHAPTER V.

### MISANTHROPY PLAYS ITS PRANKS.

A STRANGE and alarming grinding of teeth reached him through the darkness.

It was enough to drive one back: he advanced. To those to whom silence has become dreadful, a howl is comforting.

That fierce growl reassured him—that threat was a promise. There was there a being alive and awake, though it might be a wild beast. He advanced in the direction whence came the snarl.

He turned the corner of a wall, and behind in the vast sepulchral light made by the reflection of snow and sea, he saw a thing placed as if for shelter. It was a cart, unless it was

a hovel. It had wheels,—it was a carriage. It had a roof,—it was a dwelling. From the roof arose a funnel, and out of the funnel smoke. This smoke was red, and seemed to imply a good fire in the interior. Behind, projecting hinges indicated a door, and in the centre of this door a square opening showed a light inside the cavern. He approached.

Whatever had growled perceived his approach, and became furious. It was no longer a growl which he had to meet, it was a roar. He heard a sharp sound, as of a chain, violently pulled to its full length, and suddenly, under the door, between the hind wheels, two rows of sharp white teeth appeared. At the same time as the mouth between the wheels, a head was put through the window.

“Peace there!” said the head.

The mouth was silent.

The head began again,—

“Is any one there?”

The child answered,—

“Yes.”

“Who?”

“I.”

“You? Who are you? whence do you come?”

“I am weary,” said the child.

“What o’clock is it?”

“I am cold.”

“What are you doing there?”

“I am hungry.”

The head replied,—

“Every one cannot be as happy as a lord. Go away.”

The head was withdrawn and the window closed.

The child bowed his forehead, drew the sleeping infant closer in his arms, and collected his strength to resume his journey; he had taken a few steps, and was hurrying away.

However, at the same time that the window closed the door had opened; a step had been let down, the voice which had spoken to the child cried out angrily from the inside of the van.

“Well! why do you not enter?”

The child turned back.

“Come in,” resumed the voice. “Who has sent me a fellow like this, who is hungry and cold, and who does not come in?”

The child, at once repulsed and invited, remained motionless.

The voice continued,—

“You are told to come in, you youngascal.”

He made up his mind, and placed one foot on the lowest step.

There was a great growl under the van. He drew back. The gaping jaws appeared.

“Peace!” cried the voice of the man.

The jaws retreated, the growling ceased.

“Come up!” continued the man.

The child with difficulty climbed up the three steps. He was impeded by the infant so benumbed, rolled up, and enveloped in the jacket, that nothing could be distinguished of her, and that she was but a little shapeless mass.

He passed over the three steps; and having reached the threshold, stopped.

No candle was burning in the caravan, probably from the economy of want. The hut was lighted only by a red tinge, arising from the opening at the top of the stove, in which sparkled a peat fire. On the stove was smoking a porringer and a saucepan, containing to all appearance something to eat. The savory odor was perceptible. The hut was furnished with a chest, a stool, and an unlighted lantern which hung from the ceiling. Besides, to the partition were attached some boards on brackets and some hooks, from which hung a variety of things. On the boards, and nails, were rows of glasses, coppers, an alembic, a vessel rather like those used for graining wax, which are called granulators, and a confusion of strange objects of which the child understood nothing, and which were utensils for cooking and chemistry. The caravan was oblong in shape, the stove being in front. It was not even a little room; it was scarcely a big box. There was more light outside from the snow than inside from the stove. Everything in the caravan was indistinct and misty. Nevertheless, a reflection of the fire on the ceiling enabled the spectator to read in large letters,—

#### URSUS, PHILOSOPHER.

The child, in fact, was entering the house of Homo and Ursus. The one he had just heard growling, the other speaking.

The child having reached the threshold, perceived near the stove a man, tall, smooth, thin and old, dressed in gray, whose head, as he stood, reached the roof. The man could not have raised himself on tiptoe. The caravan was just his size.

"Come in!" said the man who was Ursus.

The child entered.

"Put down your bundle."

The child placed his burden carefully on the top of the chest, for fear of awakening and terrifying it.

The man continued,—

"How gently you put it down! You could not be more careful were it a case of relics. Is it that you are afraid of tearing a hole in your rags? Worthless vagabond! in the streets at this hour! Who are you? Answer! But no. I forbid you to answer. There! You are cold. Warm yourself as quick as you can," and he shoved him by the shoulders in front of the fire.

"How wet you are! You're frozen through! A nice state to come into a house! Come, take off those rags, you villain!" and as with one hand, and with feverish haste, he dragged off the boy's rags which tore into shreds, with the other he took down from a nail a man's shirt and one of those knitted jackets which are up to this day called *kiss-me-quicks*.

"Here are clothes."

He chose out of a heap a woollen rag, and chafed before the fire the limb of the exhausted and bewildered child, who at that moment, warm and naked, felt as if he were seeing and touching heaven. The limbs having been rubbed, he next wiped the boy's feet.

"Come, you limb! you have nothing frost-bitten! I was a fool to fancy you had something frozen, hind-legs or fore-paws. You will not lose the use of them this time. Dress yourself!"

The child put on the shirt, and the man slipped the knitted jacket over it.

"Now . . . ."

The man kicked the stool forward and made the little boy sit down, again shoving him by the shoulders; then he pointed with his finger to the porringer which was smoking upon the stove. What the child saw in the porringer was again heaven to him—namely, a potato and a bit of bacon.

"You are hungry—eat!"

The man took from the shelf a crust of hard bread and an iron fork, and handed them to the child.

The boy hesitated.

"Perhaps you expect me to lay the cloth,"

said the man, and he placed the porringer on the child's lap.

"Gobble that up."

Hunger overcame astonishment. The child began to eat. The poor boy devoured rather than ate. The glad sound of the crunching of bread filled the hut. The man grumbled,—

"Not so quick, you horrid glutton! Isn't he a greedy scoundrel? When such scum are hungry, they eat in a revolting fashion. You should see a lord sup. In my time, I have seen dukes eat. They don't eat; that's noble. They drink, however. Come, you pig! stuff yourself!"

The absence of ears, which is the concomitant of a hungry stomach, caused the child to take little heed of these violent epithets, tempered as they were by charity of action involving a contradiction resulting in his benefit. For the moment he was absorbed by two exigencies and by two ecstasies—food and warmth.

Ursus continued his imprecations, muttering to himself,—

"I have seen King James supping *in propria persona*, in the Banqueting House, where are to be admired the paintings of the famous Rubens. His Majesty touched nothing. This beggar here, browses—browses, a word derived from brute. What put it into my head to come to this Weymouth seven times devoted to the infernal deities? I have sold nothing since morning. I have harangued the snow. I have played the flute to the hurricane. I have not pocketed a farthing; and now, to-night, beggars drop in. Horrid place! There is battle, struggle, competition between the fools in the street and myself. They try to give me nothing but farthings. I try to give them nothing but drugs. Well! to-day I've made nothing. Not an idiot on the highway. Not a penny in the till. Eat away! Hell-born boy! Tear and crunch! We have fallen on times when nothing can equal the cynicism of spongers. Fatten at my expense, parasite! This wretched boy is more than hungry; he is mad. It is not appetite, it is ferocity. He is carried away by a rabid virus. Perhaps he has the plague. Have you the plague, you thief? Suppose he were to give it to Homo! No, never! Let the populace die, but not my wolf. But by-the-bye I am hungry myself. I declare that this is all very disagreeable. I

have worked far into the night. There are seasons in a man's life when he is hard pressed. I was to-night, by hunger. I was alone. I made a fire. I had but one potato, one crust of bread, a mouthful of bacon, and a drop of milk, and I put it to warm. I said to myself, 'Good! I think I am going to eat, and bang! this crocodile falls upon me at the very moment. He installs himself clean between my food and myself. Behold! how my larder is devastated! Eat! pike, eat! You shark! how many teeth have you in your jaws? Guzzle, wolf-cub; no, I withdraw that word. I respect wolves. Swallow up my food, boa. I have worked all day, and far into the night, on an empty stomach; my throat is sore; my pancreas in distress; my entrails torn; and my reward is to see another eat. 'Tis all one, though! We will divide. He shall have the bread, the potato and the bacon, but I will have the milk.'

Just then a wail, touching and prolonged, arose in the hut. The man listened.

"You cry! sycophant! Why do you cry?"

The boy turned towards him, it was evident that it was not he that cried. He had his mouth full.

The cry continued.

The man went to the chest.

"So it is your bundle that wails! Vale of Jehoshaphat! Behold a vociferating parcel! What the devil has your bundle got to croak about?"

He unrolled the jacket, an infant's head appeared, the mouth open and crying.

"Well! Who goes there?" said the man. "Here is another of them. When is this to end? Who is there? To arms! corporal! call out the guard; another bang! What have you brought me, thief? Don't you see it is thirsty?"

"Come! the little one must have a drink. So now I shall not have even the milk!"

He took down from the things lying in disorder on the shelf a bandage of linen, a sponge, and a phial, muttering savagely "What an infernal place!"

Then he looked at the little infant. "'Tis a girl! one can tell that by her scream, and she is drenched as well." He dragged away, as he had done from the boy, the tatters in which she was knotted up rather than dressed, and swathed her in a rag, which, though of coarse linen, was clean and dry. This rough and sudden dressing made the infant angry.

"She mews relentlessly," said he.

He bit off a long piece of sponge, tore from the roll a square piece of linen, drew from it a bit of thread, took the saucepan containing the milk from the stove, filled the phial with milk, drove down the sponge halfway into its neck, covered the sponge with linen, tied this cork in with the thread, applied his cheeks to the phial to be sure that it was not too hot, and seized under his left arm the bewildered bundle which was still crying. "Come! take your supper, creature! Let me suckle you," and he put the neck of the bottle to its mouth.

The little infant drank greedily.

He held the phial at the necessary incline, grumbling,—"'They are all the same, the cowards! When they have all they want they are silent.'"

The child had drank so ravenously, and had seized so eagerly this breast offered by a cross-grained Providence, that she was taken with a fit of coughing.

"You are going to choke!" growled Ursus. "A fine gobbler this one, too!"

He drew away the sponge which she was sucking, allowed the cough to subside, and then replaced the phial to her lips, saying, "Suck! you little wretch!"

In the meantime the boy had laid down his fork. Seeing the infant drink had made him forget to eat. The moment before, while he ate, the expression in his face was satisfaction—now it was gratitude. He watched the infant's renewal of life; the completion of the resurrection begun by himself filled his eyes with an ineffable brilliancy. Ursus went on muttering angry words between his teeth. The little boy now and then lifted towards Ursus his eyes moist with the unspeakable emotion which the poor little being felt but was unable to express. Ursus addressed him furiously.

"Well, will you eat?"

"And you?" said the child, trembling all over, and with tears in his eyes. "You will have nothing!"

"Will you be kind enough to eat it all up, you cub! There is not too much for you, since there was not enough for me."

The child took up his fork, but did not eat.

"Eat," shouted Ursus. "What has it got to do with me? Who speaks of me? Wretched little barefooted clerk of Penniless

Parish, I tell you, eat it all up. You are here to eat, drink, and sleep—eat, or I will kick you out, both of you.”

The boy, under this menace, began to eat again. He had not much trouble in finishing what was left in the porringer. Ursus muttered, “This building is badly joined. The cold comes in by the window pane.” A pane had indeed been broken in front, either by a jolt of the caravan or by a stone thrown by some mischievous boy. Ursus had placed a star of paper over the fracture, which had become unpasted. The blast entered there.

He was half seated on the chest. The infant in his arms, and at the same time on his lap, was sucking rapturously at the bottle, in the happy somnolency of cherubim before their Creator, and infants at their mothers’ breast.

“She is drunk,” said Ursus; and continued, “After this, preach sermons on temperance!”

The wind tore from the pane the plaster of paper, which flew across the hut; but this was nothing to the children who were entering life anew; whilst the little girl drank, and the little boy ate, Ursus grumbled,—

“Drunkenness begins in the infant in swaddling clothes. What useless trouble Bishop Tillotson gives himself, thundering against excessive drinking. What an odious draught of wind! And then my stove is old. It allows puffs of smoke to escape enough to give you trichiasis. One has the inconvenience of cold, and the inconvenience of fire. One cannot see clearly. That being over there abuses my hospitality. Well! I have not been able to distinguish the animal’s face yet. Comfort is wanting here. By Jove! I am a great admirer of exquisite banquets in well-closed rooms. I have missed my vocation. I was born to be a sensualist. The greatest of stoics was Philoxenus, who wished to possess the neck of a crane, so as to be longer in tasting the pleasures of the table. Receipts to-day, naught. Nothing sold all day. Inhabitants, servants, and tradesmen, here is the doctor, here are the drugs. You are losing your time, old friend. Pack up your physic. Every one is well down here. It’s a cursed town, where every one is well! The skies alone have diarrhœa—what snow! Anaxagoras taught that the snow was black; and he was right, cold being blackness. Ice is night. What a hurricane! I can fancy

the delight of those at sea. The hurricane is the passage of demons. It is the row of the tempest fiends galloping and rolling head over heels above our bone-boxes. In the cloud this one has a tail, that one has horns, another a flame for a tongue, another claws to its wings, another a lord chancellor’s paunch, another an academician’s pate. You may observe a form in every sound. To every fresh wind a fresh demon. The ear hears, the eye sees, the crash is a face. Zounds! There are folks at sea—that is certain. My friends! get through the storm as best you can. I have enough to do to get through life. Come now, do I keep an inn, or do I not? Why should I trade with these travellers. The universal distress sends its spatterings even as far as my poverty. Into my cabin fall hideous drops of the far-spreading mud of mankind. I am given up to the voracity of travellers. I am a prey—the prey of those dying of hunger. Winter, night, a pasteboard hut, an unfortunate friend below and without, the storm, a potato, a fire as big as my fist, parasites, the wind penetrating through every cranny, not a halfpenny, and bundles which set to howling. I open them and find beggars inside. Is this fair? Besides, the laws are violated. Ah! vagabond with your vagabond child! Mischievous pick-pocket, evil-minded abortion, so you walk the streets after curfew? If our good king only knew it, would he not have you thrown into the bottom of a ditch, just to teach you better! My gentleman walks out at night with my lady, and with the glass at fifteen degrees of frost, bare-headed and bare-footed. Understand that such things are forbidden. There are rules and regulations, you lawless wretches. Vagabonds are punished, honest folks who have houses are guarded and protected. Kings are the fathers of their people. I have my own house. You would have been whipped in the public street had you chanced to have been met, and quite right, too. There must be order in an established city. For my own part, I did wrong not to denounce you to the constable. But I am such a fool! I understand what is right and do what is wrong. Oh, the ruffian! to come here in such a state! I did not see the snow upon them when they came in; it had melted, and here’s my whole house swamped. I have an inundation in my home. I shall have to burn an incredible amount of coals to

dry up this lake—coals at twelve farthings, the miners' standard! How am I going to manage to fit three into this caravan! Now it is over; I enter the nursery; I am going to have in my house the weaning of the future beggards of England. I shall have for employment, office, and function, to fashion the miscarried fortunes of that colossal Prostitute, Misery, to bring to perfection future gallows' birds, and to give young thieves the forms of philosophy. The tongue of the wolf is the warning of God. And to think that if I had not been eaten up by creatures of this kind for the last thirty years, I should be rich; Homo would be fat; I should have a medicine-chest full of rarities; as many surgical instruments as Doctor Linacre, surgeon to King Henry VIII.; divers animals of all kinds; Egyptian mummies, and similar curiosities; I should be a member of the College of Physicians, and have the right of using the library, built in 1652 by the celebrated Hervey, and of studying in the lantern of that dome whence you can see the whole of London. I could continue my observations of solar obfuscation, and prove that a caliginous vapor arises from the planet. Such was the opinion of John Kepler, who was born the year before the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and who was mathematician to the emperor. The sun is a chimney which sometimes smokes; so does my stove. My stove is no better than the sun. Yes, I should have made my fortune: my part would have been a different one—I should not be the insignificant fellow I am. I should not degrade science in the highways, for the crowd is not worthy of the doctrine, the crowd being nothing better than a confused mixture of all sorts of ages, sexes, humors, and conditions, that wise men of all periods have not hesitated to despise, and whose extravagance and passion the most moderate men in their justice detest. Oh, I am weary of existence! After all, one does not live long! This human life is soon done with. But, no—it is long. At intervals, that we should not become too discouraged, that we may have the stupidity to consent to bear our being, and not profit by the magnificent opportunities to hang ourselves which cords and nails afford, nature puts on an air of taking a little care of man—not to-night, though. The rogue causes the wheat to spring up, ripens the grape, gives her song to the nightingale.

From time to time a ray of morning or a glass of gin, and that is what we call happiness! It is a narrow border of good round a huge winding-sheet of evil. We have a destiny of which the devil has woven the stuff, and God has sewn the hem. In the meantime, you have eaten my supper, you thief!"

In the meantime the infant whom he was holding all the time in his arms very tenderly whilst he was vituperating, shut its eyes languidly; a sign of repletion. Ursus examined the phial, and grumbled,—

"She has drunk it all up, the impudent creature!"

He arose, and sustaining the infant with his left arm, with his right he raised the lid of the chest and drew from beneath it a bear-skin, the one he called, as will be remembered, his real skin. Whilst he was doing this he heard the other child eating, and looked at him sideways.

"It will be something to do if, henceforth, I have to feed that growing glutton. It will be a worm gnawing at the vitals of my industry."

He spread out, still with one arm, the bear-skin on the chest, working his elbow and managing his movements so as not to disturb the sleep into which the infant was just sinking.

Then he laid her down on the fur, on the side next the fire. Having done so, he placed the phial on the stove, and exclaimed,—

"I'm thirsty, if you like!"

He looked into the pot. There were a few good mouthfuls of milk left in it; he raised it to his lips. Just as he was about to drink, his eye fell on the little girl. He replaced the pot on the stove, took the phial, uncorked it, poured into it all the milk that remained, which was just sufficient to fill it, replaced the sponge and the linen rag over it, and tied it round the neck of the bottle.

"All the same, I'm hungry and thirsty," he observed.

And he added,—

"When one cannot eat bread, one must drink water."

Behind the stove there was a jug with the spout off. He took it and handed it to the boy.

"Will you drink?"

The child drank, and then went on eating.

Ursus seized the pitcher again, and conveyed it to his mouth. The temperature of



the water which it contained had been unequally modified by the proximity to the stove.

He swallowed some mouthfuls and made a grimace.

"Water! pretending to be pure, thou resemblest false friends. Thou art warm at the top and cold at bottom."

In the meantime the boy had finished his supper. The porringer was more than empty, it was cleaned out. He picked up and ate pensively a few crumbs caught in the folds of the knitted jacket on his lap.

Ursus turned towards him.

"That is not all. Now, a word with you. The mouth is not made only for eating, it is made for speaking. Now that you are warmed and stuffed, you beast, take care of yourself. You are going to answer my questions. Whence do you come?"

The child replied,—

"I do not know."

"How do you mean, you don't know?"

"I was abandoned this evening on the sea-shore."

"You little scamp what's your name? He is so good for nothing that his relations desert him."

"I have no relations."

"Give in a little to my taste, and observe that I do not like those who sing to a tune of fibs. Thou must have relatives since you have a sister."

"It is not my sister."

"It is not your sister?"

"No."

"Who is it then?"

"It is a baby that I found."

"Found?"

"Yes."

"What! did you pick her up?"

"Yes."

"Where? If you lie I will exterminate you."

"On the breast of a woman who was dead in the snow."

"When?"

"An hour ago."

"Where?"

"A league from here."

"The arched brow of Ursus knitted and took that pointed shape which characterizes emotion on the brow of a philosopher.

"Dead! Lucky for her! We must leave in the snow. She is well off there. In which direction?"

"In the direction of the sea."

"Did you cross the bridge?"

"Yes."

Ursus opened the window at the back and examined the view.

The weather had not improved. The snow was falling thickly and mournfully.

He shut the window.

He went to the broken glass; he filled the hole with a rag; he heaped the stove with peat; he spread out as far as he could the bear-skin on the chest; took a large book which he had in a corner, placed it under the skin for a pillow, and laid the head of the sleeping infant on it.

Then he turned to the boy.

"Lie down there."

The boy obeyed, and stretched himself at full length by the side of the infant.

Ursus rolled the bear-skin over the two children, and tucked it under their feet.

He took down from a shelf, and tied round his waist, a linen belt with a large pocket containing, no doubt, a case of instruments and bottles of restoratives.

Then he took the lantern from where it hung to the ceiling and lighted it. It was a dark lantern. When lighted it still left the children in shadow.

Ursus half opened the door, and said,—

"I am going out; do not be afraid. I shall return. Go to sleep."

Then letting down the steps, he called *Homo*. He was answered by a loving growl.

Ursus, holding the lantern in his hand, descended. The steps were replaced, the door was reclosed. The children remained alone.

From without, a voice, the voice of Ursus, said,—

"You, boy, who have just eaten up my supper, are you already asleep?"

"No," replied the child.

"Well, if she cries, give her the rest of the milk."

The clinking of a chain being undone was heard, and the sound of a man's footsteps, mingled with that of the pads of an animal, died off in the distance. A few minutes after, both children slept profoundly.

The little boy and girl, lying naked side by side, were joined through the silent hours, in the seraphic promiscuousness of the shadows; such dreams as were possible to their age floated from one to the other; beneath their closed eyelids there shone, perhaps, a

starlight; if the word marriage were not inappropriate to the situation, they were husband and wife after the fashion of the angels. Such innocence in such darkness, such purity in such an embrace, such foretastes of heaven are possible only to childhood, and no immensity approaches the greatness of little children. Of all gulfs this is the deepest. The fearful perpetuity of the dead chained beyond life, the mighty animosity of the ocean to a wreck, the whiteness of the snow over buried bodies, do not equal in pathos two children's mouths meeting divinely in sleep,\* and the meeting of which is not even a kiss. A betrothal perchance, perchance a catastrophe. The unknown weighs down upon their juxtaposition. It charms, it terrifies; who knows which? It stays the pulse. Innocence is higher than virtue. Innocence is holy ignorance. They slept. They were in peace. They were warm. The nakedness of their bodies, embraced each in each, amalgamated with the virginity of their souls. They were there as in the nest of the abyss.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE AWAKING.

THE beginning of day is sinister. A sad pale light penetrated the hut. It was the frozen dawn. That wan light which throws into relief the mournful reality of objects which are blurred into spectral forms by the night, did not awake the children, so soundly were they sleeping. The caravan was warm. Their breathings alternated like two peaceful waves. There was no longer a hurricane without. The light of dawn was slowly taking possession of the horizon. The constellations were being extinguished, like candles blown out one after the other. Only a few large stars resisted. The deep-toned song of the Infinite was coming from the sea.

The fire in the stove was not quite out. The twilight broke, little by little, into daylight. The boy slept less heavily than the girl. At length, a ray brighter than the others broke through the pane, and he

opened his eyes. The sleep of childhood ends in forgetfulness. He lay in a state of semi-stupor, without knowing where he was or what was near him, without making an effort to remember, gazing at the ceiling, and setting himself an aimless task as he gazed dreamily at the letters of the inscription—Ursus, Philosopher—which, being unable to read, he examined without the power of deciphering.

The sound of a key turning in the lock caused him to turn his head.

The door turned on its hinges, the steps were let down. Ursus was returning. He ascended the steps, his extinguished lantern in his hand. At the same time the pattering of four paws fell upon the steps. It was Homo, following Ursus, who had also returned to his home.

The boy awoke with somewhat of a start. The wolf, having probably an appetite, gave him a morning yawn, showing two rows of very white teeth. He stopped when he had got half way up the steps, and placed both forepaws within the caravan, leaning on the threshold, like a preacher with his elbows on the edge of the pulpit. He sniffed the chest from afar, not being in the habit of finding it occupied as it then was. His wolfine form, framed by the doorway, was designed in black against the light of morning. He made up his mind, and entered. The boy, seeing the wolf in the caravan, got out of the bear-skin, and, standing up, placed himself in front of the little infant, who was sleeping more soundly than ever.

Ursus had just hung the lantern up on a nail in the ceiling. Silently, and with mechanical deliberation, he unbuckled the belt in which was his case, and replaced it on the shelf. He looked at nothing, and seemed to see nothing. His eyes were glassy. Something was moving him deeply in his mind. His thoughts at length found breath, as usual, in a rapid outflow of words. He exclaimed,—

“Happy, doubtless! Dead! stone dead!”

He bent down, and put a shovelfull of turf mould into the stove; and as he poked the peat, he growled out,—

“I had a deal of trouble to find her. The mischief of the unknown had buried her under two feet of snow. Had it not been for Homo, who sees as clearly with his nose as Christopher Columbus did with his mind, I

\* “Their lips were four red roses on a stem,  
Which, in their summer beauty, kissed each other.”  
*Shakespeare.*

should be still there scratching at the avalanche, and playing hide and seek with Death. Diogenes took his lantern and sought for a man. I took my lantern and sought for a woman. He found a sarcasm, and I found mourning. How cold she was. I touched her hand—a stone! What silence in her eyes. How can any one be such a fool as to die and leave a child behind! It will not be convenient to pack three into this box. A pretty family I have now! A boy and a girl!”

Whilst Ursus was speaking, Homo sidled up close to the stove. The hand of the sleeping infant was hanging down between the stove and the chest. The wolf set to licking it. He licked it so softly that he did not awake the little infant.

Ursus turned round.

“Well done, Homo. I shall be father, and you shall be uncle.”

Then he betook himself again to arranging the fire with philosophical care, without interrupting his aside.

“Adoption! It is settled; Homo is willing.”

He drew himself up.

“I should like to know who is responsible for that woman’s death? Is it man? or....”

He raised his eyes, but looked beyond the ceiling, and his lips murmured,—

“Is it Thou?”

Then his brow dropped, as if under a burthen, and he continued,—

“The night took the trouble to kill the woman.”

Raising his eyes, they met those of the boy, just awakened, who was listening. Ursus addressed him abruptly,—

“What are you laughing about?”

The boy answered,—

“I am not laughing.”

Ursus felt a kind of shock, looked at him fixedly for a few minutes and said,—

“Then you are frightful.”

The interior of the caravan, on the previous night, had been so dark that Ursus had not yet seen the boy’s face. The broad daylight revealed it. He placed the palms of his hands on the two shoulders of the boy, and, examining his countenance more and more piercingly, exclaimed,—

“Do not laugh any more!”

“I am not laughing,” said the child.

Ursus was seized with a shudder from head to foot.

“You do laugh, I tell you.”

Then seizing the child with a grasp which would have been one of fury had it not been one of pity, he asked him, roughly,—

“Who did that to you?”

The child replied,—

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“How long have you had that laugh?”

“I have always been thus” said the child.

Ursus turned towards the chest, saying in a low voice,—

“I thought that work was out of date.”

He took from the top of it, very softly, so as not to awaken the infant, the book which he had placed there for a pillow.

“Let us see Conquest,” he murmured.

It was a bundle of paper in folio, bound in soft parchment. He turned the pages with his thumb, stopped at a certain one, opened the book wide on the stove, and read,—

“‘*De Denasatis*,’ it is here.”

And he continued,—

“*Bucca fissa usque ad aures, genevivi denudatis, nasoque murdridato, masca eris, et ridebis semper.*”

“There it is for certain.”

Then he replaced the book on one of the shelves, growling.

“It might not be wholesome to inquire too deeply into a case of the kind. We will remain on the surface; laugh away my boy!”

Just then the little girl awoke. Her good-day was a cry.

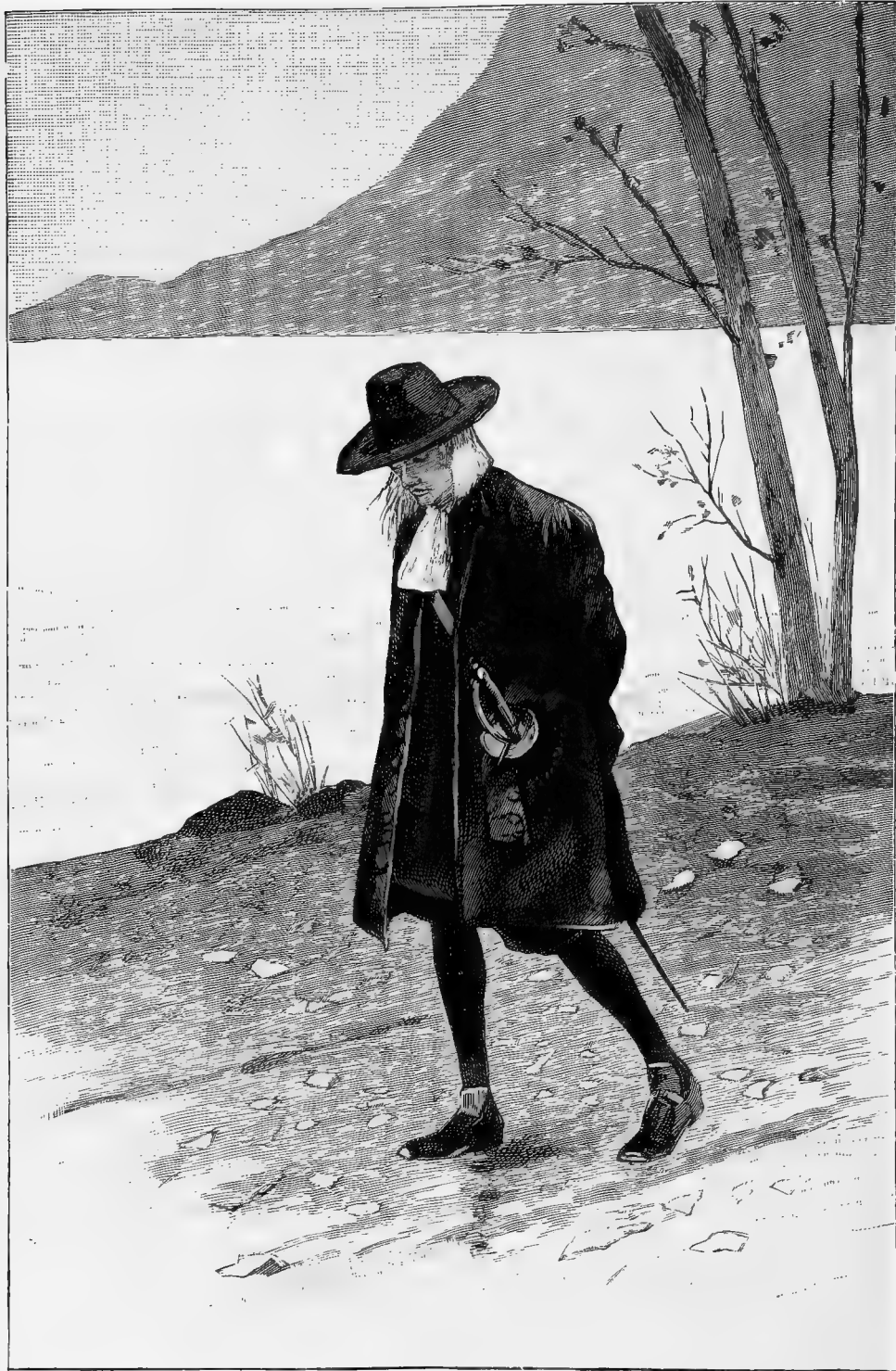
“Come, nurse, give her the breast,” said Ursus.

The infant sat up. Ursus taking the phial from the stove, gave it to her to suck.

Then the sun arose. He was level with the horizon. His red rays gleamed through the glass, and struck against the face of the infant, which was turned towards him. Her eyeballs, fixed on the sun, reflected his purple orbit like two mirrors. The eyeballs were immovable, the eyelids also.

“See!” said Ursus. “She is blind.”





LORD CLANCHARLIE.

## PART I.

## BOOK THE FIRST.

*THE EVERLASTING PRESENCE OF THE  
PAST. MAN REFLECTS MAN:*

## CHAPTER I.

LORD CLANCHARLIE.

THERE was, in those days, an old tradition.

That tradition was Lord Linnæus Clancharlie.

Linnæus Baron Clancharlie, a contemporary of Cromwell, was one of the peers of England, few in number be it said, who accepted the republic. The reason of the acceptance of it might, indeed, for want of a better, be found in the fact that for the time being, the republic was triumphant. It was a matter of course that Lord Clancharlie should adhere to the republic, as long as the republic had the upper hand; but after the close of the revolution and the fall of the parliamentary government, Lord Clancharlie had persisted in his fidelity to it. It would have been easy for the noble patrician to re-enter the reconstituted upper house, repentance being ever well received on restorations, and Charles II. being a kind prince enough to those who returned to their allegiance to him; but Lord Clancharlie had failed to understand what was due to events. While the nation overwhelmed with acclamation the king, come to re-take possession of England; while unanimity was recording its verdict, while the people were bowing their salutation to the monarchy, while the dynasty was arising anew amidst a glorious and triumphant recantation, at the moment when the past was becoming the future, and the future becoming the past, that nobleman remained refractory. He turned his head away from all that joy, and voluntarily exiled himself. While he could have been a peer, he preferred being an outlaw. Years had thus passed away. He had grown old in his fidelity to the dead republic, and was therefore crowned with the ridicule which is the natural reward of such folly.

He had retired into Switzerland, and dwelt in a sort of lofty ruin on the banks of the Lake of Geneva. He had chosen his dwelling in the most rugged nook of the lake, between Chillon, where is the dungeon of Bonnivard,

and Vevay, where is Ludlow's tomb. The rugged Alps, filled with twilight, winds, and clouds, were around him; and he lived there, hidden in the great shadows that fall from the mountains. He was rarely met by any passer-by. The man was out of his country, almost out of his century. At that time, to those who understood and were posted in the affairs of the period, no resistance to established things was justifiable. England was happy; a restoration is as the reconciliation of husband and wife, prince and nation return to each other, no state can be more graceful or more pleasant. Great Britain beamed with joy; to have a king at all was a good deal—but furthermore, the king was a charming one. Charles II. was amiable, a man of pleasure, yet able to govern, and great, if not after the fashion of Louis XIV. He was essentially a gentleman. Charles II. was admired by his subjects. He had made war in Hanover for reasons best known to himself; at least, no one else knew them. He had sold Dunkirk to France, a manœuvre of state policy. The Whig peers, concerning whom Chamberlain says, "The cursed republic infected with its stinking breath several of the high nobility," had had the good sense to bow to the inevitable, to conform to the times, and to resume their seats in the House of Lords. To do so it sufficed that they should take the oath of allegiance to the king. When these facts were considered, the glorious reign, the excellent king, august princes given back by divine mercy to the people's love; when it was remembered that persons of such consideration as Monk, and, later on, Jefferies, had rallied round the throne; that they had been properly rewarded for their loyalty and zeal by the most splendid appointments and the most lucrative offices; that Lord Clancharlie could not be ignorant of this, and that it only depended on himself to be seated by their side, glorious in his honors; that England had, thanks to her king, risen again to the summit of prosperity; that London was all banquets and carousals; that everybody was rich and enthusiastic, that the court was gallant, gay, and magnificent;—if by chance, far from these splendors, in some melancholy, indescribable half-light, like nightfall, that old man, clad in the same garb as the common people, was observed pale, absent-minded, bent towards the grave, standing on the shore of the lake,

scarce heeding the storm and the winter, walking as though at random, his eye fixed, his white hair tossed by the wind of the shadow, silent, pensive, solitary, who could forbear to smile?

It was the sketch of a madman.

Thinking of Lord Clancharlie, of what he might have been and what he was, a smile was indulgent; some laughed out aloud, others could not restrain their anger. It is easy to understand that men of sense were much shocked by the insolence implied by his isolation. One extenuating circumstance: Lord Clancharlie had never had any brains. Everyone agreed on that point.

## II.

It is disagreeable to see one's fellows practise obstinacy. Imitations of Regulus are not popular, and public opinion holds them in some derision. Stubborn people are like reproaches, and we have a right to laugh at them.

Besides, to sum up, are these perversities, these rugged notches, virtues? Is there not in these excessive advertisements of self-abnegation and of honor, a good deal of ostentation? It is all parade more than anything else. Why such exaggeration of solitude and exile? to carry nothing to extremes is the wise man's maxim. Be in opposition if you choose, blame if you will, but decently, and crying out all the while "Long live the King." The true virtue is common sense—what falls ought to fall, what succeeds ought to succeed. Providence acts advisedly, it crowns him who deserves the crown; do you pretend to know better than Providence? When matters are settled—when one rule has replaced another—when success is the scale in which truth and falsehood are weighed, in one side the catastrophe, in the other the triumph; then doubt is no longer possible, the honest man rallies to the winning side, and although it may happen to serve his fortune and his family, he does not allow himself to be influenced by that consideration, but thinking only of the public weal, holds out his hand heartily to the conqueror.

"What would become of the state if no one consented to serve it? Would not everything come to a standstill? To keep his place is the duty of a good citizen. Learn to sacrifice your secret preferences. Appoint-

ments must be filled, and some one must necessarily sacrifice himself. To be faithful to public functions is true fidelity. The retirement of public officials would paralyze the state. What! banish yourself!—how weak!—As an example?—what vanity! As a defiance?—what audacity! What do you set yourself up to be, I wonder? Learn that we are just as good as you. If we chose we too could be intractable and untameable, and do worse things than you; but we prefer to be sensible people. Because I am a Trimalcion, you think that I could not be a Cato! What nonsense!

## III.

Never was a situation more clearly defined or more decisive than that of 1660. Never had a course of conduct been more plainly indicated to a well-ordered mind. England was out of Cromwell's grasp. Under the republic many irregularities had been committed. British preponderance had been created. With the aid of the Thirty-Years' war, Germany had been overcome; with the aid of the Fronde, France had been humiliated; with the aid of the Duke of Braganza, the power of Spain had been lessened. Cromwell had tamed Mazarin; in signing treaties the Protector of England wrote his name above that of the King of France. The United Provinces had been put under a fine of eight millions; Algiers and Tunis had been attacked; Jamaica conquered; Lisbon humbled; French rivalry encouraged in Barcelona, and Masaniello in Naples; Portugal had been made fast to England; the seas had been swept of Barbary pirates from Gibraltar to Crete; maritime domination had been founded under two forms, Victory and Commerce. On the 10th of August, 1653, the man of thirty-three victories, the old Admiral who called himself the sailors' grandfather, Martin Happertz van Tromp, who had beaten the Spanish, had been destroyed by the English fleet. The Atlantic had been cleared of the Spanish navy, the Pacific of the Dutch, the Mediterranean of the Venetian, and by the patent of navigation, England had taken possession of the sea-coast of the world. By the ocean she commanded the world; at sea the Dutch flag humbly saluted the British flag. France, in the person of the Ambassador Mancini, bent the knee to Oliver Cromwell; and Cromwell played with Calais and Dun-

kirk as with two shuttlecocks on a battledore. The continent had been taught to tremble, peace had been dictated, war declared, the British Ensign raised on every pinnacle. By itself the protector's regiment of Ironsides weighed in the fears of Europe against an army. Cromwell used to say, "*I wish the Republic of England to be respected, as was respected the Republic of Rome.*" No longer were delusions held sacred; speech was free, the press was free. In the public street men said what they listed; they printed what they pleased without control or censorship. The equilibrium of thrones had been destroyed. The whole order of European monarchy, in which the Stewart's formed a link, had been overturned. But at last England had emerged from the odious order of things, and had won its pardon.

The indulgent Charles II had granted the declaration of Breda. He had conceded to England oblivion of the period in which the son of the Huntingdon brewer placed his foot on the neck of Louis XIV. England said its *meâ culpâ*, and breathed again. The cup of joy was, as we have just said, full; gibbets for regicides adding to the universal delight. A restoration is a smile; but a few gibbets are not out of place, and satisfaction is due to the conscience of the public. To be good subjects was thenceforth the people's sole ambition. The spirit of lawlessness had been expelled. Royalty was reconstituted. Men had recovered from the follies of politics. They mocked at revolution, they jeered at the republic, and as to those times when such strange words as *Right, Liberty, Progress*, had been in the mouth,—why they laughed at such bombast! Admirable was the return to common sense. England had been in a dream. What joy to be quit of such errors! Was ever anything so mad? Where should we be if everyone had his rights? Fancy everyone's having a hand in the government? Can you imagine a city ruled by citizens? Why, the citizens are the team, and the team cannot be driver. To put to the vote is to throw to the winds. Would you have states driven like clouds? Disorder cannot build up order. With chaos for an architect, the edifice would be a Babel. And, besides, what tyranny is this pretended liberty! As for me, I wish to enjoy myself; not to govern. It is a bore to have to vote; I want to dance. A prince is a providence, and takes care of them

all. Truly the king is generous to take so much trouble for our sakes. Besides, he is to the manner born. He knows what it is. It's his business. Peace, War, Legislation, Finance—what have the people to do with such things? Of course the people have to pay; of course the people have to serve; but that should suffice them. They have a place in policy; from them come two essential things, the army and the budget. To be liable to contribute, and to be liable to serve; is not that enough? What more should they want? They are the military and the financial arm. A magnificent rôle. The king reigns for them, and they must reward him accordingly. Taxation and the civil list are the salaries paid by the peoples and earned by the prince. The people give their blood and their money, in return for which they are led. To wish to lead themselves! what an absurd idea! They require a guide; being ignorant, they are blind. Has not the blind man his dog? Only the people have the lion, the king, who consents to act the dog. How kind of him! But why are the people ignorant? because it is good for them. Ignorance is the guardian of Virtue. Where there is no perspective there is no ambition. The ignorant man is in useful darkness, which, suppresses covetousness: whence innocence. He who reads, thinks, who thinks, reasons. But not to reason is duty; and happiness as well. These truths are incontestable; society is based on them.

Thus had sound social doctrines been re-established in England; thus had the nation been reinstated. At the same time a correct taste in literature was reviving. Shakspeare was despised, Dryden admired. "*Dryden is the greatest poet of England and of the century,*" said Atterbury, the translator of "*Achitophel.*" It was about the time when M. Huet, Bishop of Avranches, wrote to Sau-maise, who had done the author of "*Paradise Lost*" the honor to refute and abuse him,—"*How can you trouble yourself about so mean a thing as that Milton?*" Everything was falling into its proper place: Dryden above, Shakspeare below; Charles II. on the throne, Cromwell on the gibbet. England was raising herself out of the shame and the excesses of the past. It is a great happiness for nations to be led back by monarchy to good order in the state and good taste in letters.

That such benefits should be misunderstood, is difficult to believe. To turn the cold



shoulder to Charles II., to reward with ingratitude the magnanimity which is displayed in ascending the throne—was not such conduct abominable? Lord Linnæus Clancharlie had inflicted this vexation upon honest men. To sulk at his country's happiness, alack, what aberration!

We know that in 1650 Parliament had drawn up this form of declaration: "*I promise to remain faithful to the republic, without king, sovereign, or lord.*" Under pretext of having taken this monstrous oath, Lord Clancharlie was living out of the kingdom, and, in the face of the general joy, thought that he had the right to be sad. He had a morose esteem for that which was no more, and was absurdly attached to things which had been.

To excuse him was impossible. The kindest-hearted abandoned him; his friends had long done him the honor to believe that he had entered the republican ranks only to observe the more closely the flaws in the republican armor, and to smite it the more surely when the day should come, for the sacred cause of the king. These lurkings in ambush for the convenient hour to strike the enemy a death-blow in the back, are attributes of loyalty. Such a line of conduct had been expected of Lord Clancharlie, so strong was the wish to judge him favorably; but, in the face of his strange persistence in republicanism, the people were obliged to lower their estimate. Evidently Lord Clancharlie was confirmed in his convictions—that is to say, an idiot!

The explanation given by the indulgent, waived between puerile stubbornness and senile obstancy.

The severe and the just went further; they blighted the name of the renegade. Folly has its rights, but it has also its limits. A man may be a brute, but he has no right to be a rebel. And, after all, what was this Lord Clancharlie? A deserter. He had fled his camp, the aristocracy, for that of the enemy, the people. This, faithful man was a traitor. It is true that he was a traitor to the stronger, and faithful to the weaker; it is true that the camp repudiated by him was the conquering camp, and the camp adopted by him, the conquered; it is true that by his treason he lost everything—his political privileges and his domestic hearth, his title and his country. He gained nothing but ridicule,

he attained no benefit but exile. But what does all this prove?—that he was a fool. Granted.

Plainly a dupe and traitor in one. Let a man be as great a fool as he likes, so that he does not set a bad example. Fools need only be civil, and in consideration thereof may aim at being the basis of monarchies. The narrowness of Clancharlie's mind was incomprehensible. His eyes were still dazzled by the phantasmagora of the revolution. He had allowed himself to be taken in by the republic—yes; and cast out. He was an affront to his country. The attitude he assumed was downright felony. Absence was insult. He held aloof from the public joy as from the plague. In his voluntary banishment he found some indescribable refuge from the national rejoicing. He treated loyalty as a contagion; over the widespread gladness at the revival of the monarchy, denounced by him as a lazaretto, he was the black flag. What! could he look thus askance at order reconstituted, a nation exalted, and a religion restored? Over such serenity why cast his shadow? Take umbrage at England's contentment! Must he be the one blot in the clear blue sky! Be as a threat! Protest against a nation's will! refuse his Yes to the universal consent! It would be disgusting, if it were not the part of a fool. Clancharlie could not have taken then into account the fact that it did not matter if one had taken the wrong turn with Cromwell, as long as one found one's way back into the right path with Monk.

Take Monk's case. He commands the republican army. Charles II., having been informed of his honesty, writes to him. Monk, who combines virtue with tact, dissimulates at first, then suddenly at the head of his troops dissolves the rebel parliament, and re-establishes the king on the throne. Monk is created Duke of Albemarle, has the honor of having saved society, becomes very rich, sheds a glory over his own time, is created Knight of the Garter, and has the prospect of being buried in Westminster Abbey. Such glory is the reward of British fidelity!

Lord Clancharlie could never rise to a sense of duty thus carried out. He had the infatuation and obstinacy of an exile. He contented himself with hollow phrases. He was tongue-tied by pride. The words conscience and dignity are but words, after all. One must penetrate to the depths. These depths Lord Clancharlie had not reached.

His "eye was single," and before committing an act, he wished to observe it so closely as to be able to judge it by more senses than one. Hence arose absurd disgust to the facts examined. No man can be a statesman who gives way to such overstrained delicacy. Excess of conscientiousness degenerates into infirmity. Scruple is one-handed when a sceptre is to be seized, and an eunuch when fortune is to be wedded. Distrust scruples; they drag you too far. Unreasonable fidelity is like a ladder leading into a cavern—one step down, another, then another, and there you are in the dark. The clever reascend; fools remain in it. Conscience must not be allowed to practise such austerity. If it be, it will fall until, from transition to transition, it at length reaches the deep gloom of political prudery. Then one is lost. Thus it was with Lord Clancharlie.

Principles terminate in a precipice.

He was walking, his hands behind him, along the shores of the Lake of Geneva. A fine way of getting on!

In London they sometimes spoke of the exile. He was accused before the tribunal of public opinion. They pleaded for and against him. The cause having been heard, he was acquitted on the ground of stupidity.

Many zealous friends of the former republic had given their adherence to the Stuarts. For this they deserve praise. They naturally calumniated him a little. The obstinate are repulsive to the compliant. Men of sense, in favor and good places of Court, weary of his disagreeable attitude, took pleasure in saying, "*If he has not rallied to the throne, it is because he has not been sufficiently paid,*" etc. "*He wanted the chancellorship which the king has given to Hyde.*" One of his old friends went so far as to whisper, "*He told me so himself.*" Remote as was the solitude of Linnæus Clancharlie, something of this talk would reach him through the outlaws he met, such as old regicides like Andrew Broughton, who lived at Lausanne. Clancharlie confined himself to an imperceptible shrug of the shoulders, a sign of profound deterioration. On one occasion he added to the shrug these few words, murmured in a low voice, "I pity those who believe such things."

#### IV.

Charles II., good man! despised him. The happiness of England under Charles II.

was more than happiness, it was enchantment. A restoration is like an oil painting, blackened by time, and re-varnished. All the past reappeared, good old manners returned, beautiful women reigned and governed. Evelyn notices it. We read in his journal, "Luxury, profaneness, contempt of God. I saw the king on Sunday evening with his courtizans, Portsmouth, Cleveland, Mazarin, and two or three others, all nearly naked in the gaming-room." We feel that there is ill-nature in this description, for Evelyn was a grumbling puritan, tainted with republican reveries. He did not appreciate the profitable example given by kings in those grand Babylonian gaities, which, after all, maintain luxury. He did not understand the utility of vice. Here is a maxim: Do not extirpate vice, if you want to have charming women; if you do you are like idiots who destroy the chrysalis whilst they delight in the butterfly.

Charles II., as we have said, scarcely remembered that a rebel called Clancharlie existed; but James II. was more heedful. Charles II. governed gently, it was his way; we may add, that he did not govern the worse on that account. A sailor sometimes makes on a rope intended to baffle the wind, a slack knot which he leaves to the wind to tighten. Such is the stupidity of the storm and of the people.

The slack knot very soon becomes a tight one. So did the government of Charles II.

Under James II. the throttling began; a necessary throttling of what remained of the revolution. James II. had a laudable ambition to be an efficient king. The reign of Charles II. was, in his opinion, but a sketch of restoration. James wished for a still more complete return to order. He had, in 1660, deplored that they had confined themselves to the hanging of ten regicides. He was a more genuine reconstructor of authority. He infused vigor into serious principles. He installed true justice, which is superior to sentimental declamations, and attends, above all things to the interests of society. In his protecting severities we recognize the father of the state. He entrusted the hand of justice to Jefferies, and its sword to Kirke. That useful Colonel, one day, hung and rehung the same man, a republican, asking him each time, "Will you renounce the republic?" The villain, having each time said "No,"

was despatched.—“*I hanged him four times,*” said Kirke, with satisfaction. The renewal of executions is a great sign of power in the executive authority. Lady Lisle, who, though she had sent her son to fight against Monmouth, had concealed two rebels in her house, was executed; another rebel, having been honorable enough to declare that an anabaptist female had given him shelter, was pardoned, and the woman was burned alive. Kirke, on another occasion, gave a town to understand that he knew its principles to be republican, by hanging nineteen burgesses. These reprisals were certainly legitimate, for it must be remembered that, under Cromwell, they cut off the noses and ears of the stone saints in the churches. James II., who had had the sense to choose Jefferies and Kirke, was a prince imbued with true religion; he practised mortification in the ugliness of his mistresses; he listened to le Père la Colombière, a preacher almost as unctuous as le Père Cheminai, but with more fire, who had the glory of being, during the first part of his life, the counsellor of James II., and, during the latter, the inspirer of Mary Alcock. It was, thanks to this strong religious nourishment, that later on, James II. was enabled to bear exile with dignity, and to exhibit, in his retirement at St. Germain, the spectacle of a king rising superior to adversity, calmly touching for king's evil, and conversing with Jesuits.

It will be readily understood that such a king would trouble himself to a certain extent about such a rebel as Lord Linnaeus Clancharlie. Hereditary peerages have a certain hold on the future, and it was evident that if any precautions were necessary with regard to that lord, James II. was not the man to hesitate.

## CHAPTER II.

### LORD DAVID DIRRY-MOIR.

LORD LINNÆUS CLANCHARLIE had not always been old and proscribed; he had had his phase of youth and passion. We know from Harrison and Pride that Cromwell, when young, loved women and pleasure, a taste which, at times (another reading of the text “Woman”), betrays a seditious man. Distrust the loosely-clasped girdle. *Male præcinctam juvenem cavete.* Lord Clancharlie,

like Cromwell, had had his wild hours and his irregularities. He was known to have had a natural child, a son. This son was born in England in the last days of the republic, just as his father was going into exile. Hence he had never seen his father. This bastard of Lord Clancharlie had grown up as page at the court of Charles II. He was styled Lord David Dirry-Moir: he was a lord by courtesy, his mother being a woman of quality. The mother, while Lord Clancharlie was becoming an owl in Switzerland, made up her mind, being a beauty, to give over sulking, and was forgiven that Goth, her first lover, by one undeniably polished and at the same time a royalist, for it was the king himself.

She had been but a short time the mistress of Charles II., sufficiently long however to have made his majesty—who was delighted to have won so pretty a woman from the republic—bestow on the little Lord David, the son of his conquest, the office of keeper of the stick, which made that bastard officer, boarded at the king's expense, by a natural revulsion of feeling, an ardent adherent of the Stuarts. Lord David was for some time one of the hundred and seventy wearing the great sword, while afterwards, entering the corps of pensioners, he became one of the forty who bear the gilded halberd. He had, besides being one of the noble company instituted by Henry VIII. as a body guard, the privilege of laying the dishes on the king's table. Thus it was that while his father was growing gray in exile, Lord David prospered under Charles II.

After which he prospered under James II.

The king is dead. Long live the king! It is the *non deficit alter, aureus*.

It was on the accession of the Duke of York, that he obtained permission to call himself David Lord Dirry-Moir, from an estate which his mother, who had just died, had left him, in that great forest of Scotland, where is found the krag, a bird which scoops out a nest with its beak in the trunk of the oak.

## II.

James II. was a king, and affected to be a general. He loved to surround himself with young officers. He showed himself frequently in public on horseback, in a helmet and cuirass, with a huge projecting wig hanging below the helmet and over the cuirass,—a sort

of equestrian statue of imbecile war. He took a fancy to the graceful mien of the young Lord David. He liked the royalist for being the son of a republican. The repudiation of a father does not damage the foundation of a court fortune. The king made Lord David gentleman of the bedchamber, at a salary of a thousand a year.

It was a fine promotion. A gentleman of the bedchamber sleeps near the king every night, on a bed which is made up for him. There are twelve gentlemen, who relieve each other.

Lord David, whilst he held that post, was also head of the king's granary, giving out corn for the horses and receiving a salary of 260*l*. Under him were the five coachmen of the king, the five postilions of the king, the five grooms of the king, the twelve footmen of the king, and the four chair-bearers of the king. He had the management of the race-horses which the king kept at Newmarket, and which cost his majesty 600*l*. a year. He worked his will on the king's wardrobe, from which the knights of the garter are furnished with their robes of ceremony. He was saluted on the ground by the usher of the black rod, who belongs to the king. That usher under James II., was the knight of Duppa. Mr. Baker, who was clerk of the crown, and Mr. Brown, who was clerk of the Parliament, kotood to Lord David. The court of England, which is magnificent, is a model of hospitality. Lord David presided, as one of the twelve, at banquets and receptions. He had the glory of standing behind the king on effortory days, when the king gives to the church the golden *byzantium*; on collar-days, when the king wears the collar of his order; on communion days, when no one takes the sacrament excepting the king and princes. It was he who, on Holy Thursday, introduced into his Majesty's presence the twelve poor men to whom the king gives as many silver pence as the years of his age, and as many shillings as the years of his reign. The duty devolved on him when the king was ill, to call to the assistance of his majesty the two grooms of the almonry, who are priests, and to prevent the approach of doctors without permission from the council of state. Besides, he was lieutenant-colonel of the Scotch regiment of Guards, the one which plays the Scottish march. As such, he made several campaigns, and with glory, for he was a gallant soldier. He was a

brave lord, well-made, handsome, generous, and majestic in look and in manner. His person was like his quality. He was tall in stature, as well as high in birth.

At one time he stood a chance of being made groom of the stole, which would have given him the privilege of putting the king's shirt on his majesty: but to hold that office it was necessary to be either prince or peer. Now, to create a peer is a serious thing; it is to create a peerage, and that makes many people jealous. It is a favor; a favor which gives the king one friend and a hundred enemies, without taking into account that the one friend becomes ungrateful. James II., from policy, was indisposed to create peerages, but he transferred them freely. The transfer of a peerage produces no sensation. It is simply the continuation of a name. The order is little affected by it.

The good-will of royalty had no objection to raise Lord David Dirry-Moir to the upper house so long as it could do so by means of a substituted peerage. Nothing would have pleased his majesty better than to transform Lord David Dirry-Moir, lord by courtesy, into a lord by right.

### III.

The opportunity occurred.

One day it was announced that several things had happened to the old exile, Lord Clancharlie, the most important of which was that he was dead. Death does just this much good to folks: it causes a little talk about them. People related what they knew, or what they thought they knew, of the last years of Lord Linnæus. What they said was probably legend and conjecture. If these random tales were to be credited, Lord Clancharlie must have had his republicanism intensified before the end of his life, to the extent of of marrying (strange obstinacy of the exile!) Ann Bradshaw, the daughter of a regicide; they were precise about the name. She had also died, it was said, but in giving birth to a boy. If these details should prove to be correct, his child would of course be the legitimate and rightful heir of Lord Clancharlie. The reports, however, were extremely vague in form, and were rumors rather than facts. Circumstances which happened in Switzerland, in those days, were as remote from the England of that period as those which take place in China from the England

of to-day. Lord Clancharlie must have been fifty-nine at the time of his marriage, they said, and sixty at the birth of his son, and must have died shortly after, leaving his infant orphaned both of father and mother. This was possible, perhaps, but improbable. They added that the child was beautiful as the day,—just as we read in all the fairy tales. King James put an end to these rumors, evidently without foundation, by declaring one fine morning, Lord David Dirry-Moir sole and positive heir *in default of legitimate issue*, and by his royal pleasure, of Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, his natural father, *the absence of all other issue and descent being established*, patents of which grant were registered in the House of Lords. By these patents the king instituted Lord David Dirry-Moir, in the titles, rights, and prerogatives of the late Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, on the sole condition that Lord David should wed, when she attained a marriageable age, a girl who was, at that time, a mere infant a few months old, and whom the king had, in her cradle, created a duchess, no one knew exactly why; or, rather, every one knew why. This little infant was called the Duchess Josiana.

The English fashion then ran on Spanish names. One of Charles II.'s bastards was called Carlos, Earl of Plymouth. It is likely that Josiana was a contraction for Josefa-y-Ana. Josiana, however, may have been a name—the feminine of Josias. One of Henry VIII.'s gentlemen was called Josias du Passage.

It was to this little duchess that the king granted the peerage of Clancharlie. She was a peeress till there should be a peer; the peer should be her husband. The peerage was founded on a double castleward, the barony of Clancharlie and the barony of Hunkerville; besides, the barons of Clancharlie were, in recompense of an ancient feat of arms, and by royal license, Marquises of Corleone, in Sicily.

Peers of England cannot bear foreign titles; there are, nevertheless, exceptions; thus—Henry Arundel, Baron Arundel of Wardeur, was, as well as Lord Clifford, a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, of which Lord Cowper is a prince. The Duke of Hamilton is Duke of Chatelherault, in France; Basil Feilding, Earl of Denbigh is Count of Hapsburg, of Lauffenberg, and of Rheinfelden, in Germany. The Duke of Marlborough was Prince of

Mindelheim, in Suabia, just as the Duke of Wellington was Prince of Waterloo, in Belgium. The same Lord Wellington was a Spanish Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo, and Portuguese Count of Vimiera.

There was in England, and there are still, lands both noble and common. The lands of the Lords of Clancharlie were all noble. These lands, burghs, bailiwicks, fiefs, rents, freeholds, and domains, adherent to the peerage of Clancharlie-Hunkerville, belonged provisionally to Lady Josiana, and the king declared that, once married to Josiana, Lord David Dirry-Moir should be Baron Clancharlie.

Besides the Clancharlie inheritance, Lady Josiana had her own fortune. She possessed great wealth, much of which was derived from the gifts of *Madame sans queue* to the Duke of York. *Madame sans queue* is short for Madame. Henrietta of England, Duchess of Orleans, the lady of highest rank in France after the queen, was thus called.

#### IV.

Having prospered under Charles and James, Lord David prospered under William. His Jacobite feeling did not reach the extent of following James into exile. While he continued to love his legitimate king, he had the good sense to serve the usurper; he was, moreover, although sometimes disposed to rebel against discipline, an excellent officer. He passed from the land to the sea forces, and distinguished himself in the White Squadron. He rose in it to be what was then called captain of a light frigate. Altogether he made a very fine fellow, carrying to a great extent the elegancies of vice: a bit of a poet, like every one else; a good servant of the state, a good servant to the prince; assiduous at feasts, at galas, at ladies' receptions, at ceremonies, and in battle; servile in a gentlemanlike way; very haughty; with eyesight dull or keen, according to the object examined; inclined to integrity; obsequious or arrogant, as occasion required; frank and sincere on acquaintance, with the power of assuming the mask afterwards; very observant of the smiles and frowns of the royal humor; careless before a sword's point; always ready to risk his life on a sign from his majesty with heroism and complacency capable of any insult but of no impoliteness; a man of courtesy and etiquette, proud of

kneeling at great regal ceremonies; of a gay valor; a courtier on the surface, a paladin below; quite young at forty-five. Lord David sang French songs, an elegant gaiety which had delighted Charles II. He loved eloquence and fine language. He greatly admired those celebrated discourses which are called the funeral orations of Bossuet.

From his mother he had inherited almost enough to live on, about 10,000*l.* a year. He managed to get on with it—by running into debt. In magnificence, extravagance, and novelty he was without a rival. Directly he was copied he changed his fashion. On horseback he wore loose boots of cow-hide, which turned over, with spurs. He had hats like nobody else's; unheard-of lace, and bands of which he alone had the pattern.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE DUCHESS JOSIANA.

TOWARDS 1705, although Lady Josiana was twenty-three and Lord David forty-four, the wedding had not yet taken place, and that for the best reasons in the world. Did they hate each other? Far from it; but what cannot escape from you inspires you with no haste to obtain it. Josiana wanted to remain free, David to remain young. To have no tie until as late as possible appeared to him to be a prolongation of youth. Middle-aged young men abounded in those rakish times. They grew gray as young fops. The wig was an accomplice: later on, powder became the auxiliary. At fifty-five Lord Charles Gerrard, Baron Gerrard, one of the Gerrards of Bromley, filled London with his successes. The young and pretty Duchess of Buckingham, Countess of Coventry, made a fool of herself for love of the handsome Thomas Bellasys, Viscount Fauconberg, who was sixty-seven. People quoted the famous verses of Corneille, the septuagenarian, to a girl of twenty—" *Marquise, si mon visage,*" Women, too, had their successes in the autumn of life. Witness Ninon and Marion. Such were the models of the day.

Josiana and David carried on a flirtation of a particular shade. They did not love, they pleased, each other. To be at each other's side sufficed them. Why hasten the conclusion? The novels of those days carried lovers and engaged couples to that kind of stage

which was the most becoming. Besides, Josiana, while she knew herself to be a bastard, felt herself a princess, and carried her authority over him with a high tone in all their arrangements. She had a fancy for Lord David. Lord David was handsome, but that was over and above the bargain. She considered him to be fashionable.

To be fashionable is everything. Caliban, fashionable and magnificent, would distance Ariel, poor. Lord David was handsome; so much the better. The danger of being handsome is being insipid; and that he was not. He betted, boxed, ran into debt. Josiana thought great things of his horses, his dogs, his losses at play, his mistresses. Lord David, on his side, bowed down before the fascinations of the Duchess Josiana—a maiden without spot or scruple, haughty, inaccessible and audacious. He addressed sonnets to her, which Josiana sometimes read. In these sonnets he declared that to possess Josiana would be to rise to the stars, which did not prevent his always putting the ascent off to the following year. He waited in the antechamber outside Josiana's heart; and this suited the convenience of both. At court all admired the good taste of this delay. Lady Josiana said, "It is a bore that I should be obliged to marry Lord David; I, who would desire nothing better than to be in love with him!"

Josiana was "the flesh." Nothing could be more resplendent. She was very tall—too tall. Her hair was of that tinge which might be called red gold. She was plump, fresh, strong, and rosy, with immense boldness and wit. She had eyes which were too intelligible. She had neither lovers nor chastity. She walled herself round with pride. Men! oh, fie! a god would only be worthy of her, or a monster. If virtue consists in the protection of an inaccessible position, Josiana possessed all possible virtue, but without any innocence. She disdained intrigues; but she would not have been displeased had she been supposed to have engaged in some, provided that the objects were uncommon, and proportioned to the merits of one so highly placed. She thought little of her reputation, but much of her glory. To appear yielding, and to be unapproachable, is perfection. Josiana felt herself majestic and material. Hers was a cumbrous beauty. She usurped rather than charmed. She trod upon hearts.

She was earthly. She would have been as much astonished at being proved to have a soul in her bosom as wings on her back. She discoursed on Locke; she was polite; she was suspected of knowing Arabic.

To be the "flesh" and to be woman are two different things. Where a woman is vulnerable, on the side of pity, for instance, which so readily turns to love, Josiana was not. Not that she was unfeeling. The ancient comparison of flesh to marble is absolutely false. The beauty of flesh consists in not being marble: its beauty is to palpitate, to tremble, to blush, to bleed, to have firmness without hardness; to be white without being cold; to have its sensations and its infirmities; its beauty is to be life, and marble is death.

Flesh, when it attains a certain degree of beauty, has almost a claim to the right of nudity; it conceals itself in its own dazzling charms as in a veil. He who might have looked upon Josiana nude, would have perceived her outlines only through a surrounding glory. She would have shown herself without hesitation to a satyr or a cunuch. She had the self-possession of a goddess. To have made her nudity a torment, ever eluding a pursuing Tantalus, would have been an amusement to her.

The king had made her a duchess, and Jupiter a Nereid—a double irradiation of which the strange brightness of this creature was composed. In admiring her you felt yourself becoming a pagan and a lackey. Her origin had been bastardy and the ocean. She appeared to have emerged from the foam. From the stream had risen the first jet of her destiny; but the spring was royal. In her there was something of the wave, of chance, of the patrician, and of the tempest. She was well read and accomplished. Never had a passion approached her, yet she had sounded them all. She had a disgust for realizations, and at the same time a taste for them. If she had stabbed herself, it would, like Lucretia, not have been until afterwards. She was a virgin stained with every defilement in its visionary stage. She was a possible Astarte in a real Diana. She was in the insolence of high birth, tempting and inaccessible. Nevertheless, she might find it amusing to plan a fall for herself. She dwelt in a halo of glory, half wishing to descend from it, and perhaps feeling curious to know what a fall was like.

She was a little too heavy for her cloud. To err is a diversion. Princely unconstraint has the privilege of experiment; and what is frailty in a plebeian, is only frolic in a duchess. Josiana was in everything—in birth, in beauty, in irony, in brilliancy—almost a queen. She had felt a moment's enthusiasm for Louis de Bouffles, who used to break horse-shoes between his fingers. She regretted that Hercules was dead. She lived in some undefined expectation of a voluptuous and supreme ideal.

Morally, Josiana brought to one's mind the line—

"Un beau torse de femme en hydre se terminer."

Hers was a noble neck, a splendid bosom, heaving harmoniously over a royal heart, a glance full of life and light, a countenance pure and haughty, and who knows? below the surface was there not, in a semi-transparent and misty depth, an undulating, supernatural prolongation, perchance deformed and dragon-like,—a proud virtue ending in vice in the depths of dreams.

## II.

With all that she was a prude.

It was the fashion.

Remember Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was of a type that prevailed in England for three centuries: the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth. Elizabeth was more than English, she was Anglican. Hence the deep respect of the Episcopalian Church for that queen,—a respect resented by the Church of Rome, which counterbalanced it with a dash of excommunication. In the mouth of Sixtus V., when anathematizing Elizabeth, malediction turned to madrigal: "*Un gran cervello di principessa*," he says. Mary Stuart, less concerned with the church and more with the woman part of the question, had little respect for her sister Elizabeth; and wrote to her as queen to queen and coquette to prude: "Your disinclination to marriage arises from your not wishing to lose the liberty of being made love to." Mary Stuart played with the fan, Elizabeth with the axe. An uneven match. They were rivals, besides, in literature. Mary Stuart composed French verses; Elisabeth translated Horace. The ugly Elizabeth decreed herself beautiful; like quatrains and acrostics; had the keys of towns presented to her by cupids; bit her

lips, after the Italian fashion, rolled her eyes after the Spanish; had in her wardrobe three thousand dresses and costumes of which several were of the character of Minerva and Amphitrite; esteemed the Irish for the width of their shoulders; covered her farthingale with braids and spangles; loved roses; cursed, swore and stamped; struck her maids of honor with her clinched fists; used to send Dudley to the devil; beat Burleigh, the Chancellor, who would cry—poor old fool! spat on Mathew; collared Hatton; boxed the ears of Essex; showed her legs to Bassompierre; and was a virgin.

What she did for Bassompierre, the Queen of Sheba had done for Solomon,\* consequently she was right, Holy Writ having created the precedent. That which is biblical may well be Anglican, precedent goes so far as to speak of a child who was called Ebnehaquem, or Melilechet, that is to say, the Wise Man's son.

Why object to such manners? Cynicism is at least as good as hypocrisy.

Nowadays England, whose Loyola is named Wesley, casts down her eyes a little at the remembrance of that past age. She is vexed at the memory, yet proud of it.

Amidst such manners as these, a taste for deformity existed, especially amongst women, and singularly amongst beautiful women. Where is the use of being beautiful if one does not possess a baboon? Where is the charm of being a queen if one cannot bandy words with a dwarf? Mary Stuart had "been kind" to the bandy-legged Rizzio. Maria Theresa, of Spain, had been "somewhat familiar" with a negro. Whence the *black abbess*. In the alcoves of the great century, a hump was the fashion; witness the Marshal of Luxembourg, and before Luxembourg, Condé, "such a pretty little man!"

Beauties themselves might be ill-made without detriment; it was admitted. Anne Boleyn had one breast bigger than the other, six fingers to one hand, and a projecting tooth; Lavallière was bandy-legged; which did not hinder Henry VIII. from going mad for the one, and Louis XIV. for the other.

Morals were equally awry. There was not a woman of high rank who was not teratological. Agnes possessed the principles of Messina. They were women by day, ghouls by

night. They sought the scaffold to kiss the heads of the newly beheaded on their iron stakes. Marguerite de Valois, a predecessor of the prudes, wore, fastened to her belt, the hearts of her lovers in tin boxes, padlocked. Henry IV. had hidden himself under her farthingale.

In the 18th century the Duchess de Berry, daughter of the Regent, was in herself an abstract, of obscene and royal type, of all these creatures.

These fine ladies, moreover, knew Latin. From the 16th century this had been accounted a feminine accomplishment. Lady Jane Grey had carried fashion to the point of knowing Hebrew. The Duchess Josiana latinized. Then (another fine thing) she was secretly a Catholic; after the manner of her uncle, Charles II., rather than her father, James II. James II. had lost his crown for his catholicism, and Josiana did not care to risk her peerage. Thus it was that while a Catholic amongst her intimate friends and the refined of both sexes, she was outwardly a Protestant for the benefit of the riff-raff.

This is the pleasant view to take of religion. You enjoy all the good things belonging to the official Episcopalian church, and later on you die, like Grotius, in the odor of Catholicity, having the glory of a mass being said for you by le Père Petau.

Although plump and healthy, Josiana was, we repeat, a perfect prude.

At times, her sleepy and voluptuous way of dragging out the end of her phrases, was like the creeping of a tiger's paws in the jungle.

The advantage of prudes is that they disorganize the human race. They deprive it of the honor of their adherence. Beyond all, keep the human species at a distance. This is a point of the greatest importance.

When one has not got Olympus, one must take the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Juno resolves herself into Araminta. A pretension to divinity not admitted, creates an affectation. In default of thunder-claps there is impertinence. The temple shrivels into the boudoir. Not having the power to be a goddess, she is an idol.

There is besides, in prudery, a certain pedantry which is pleasing to women. The coquette and the pedant are neighbors. Their kinship is visible in the fop. The subtle is derived from the sensual. Gluttony affects delicacy, a grimace of disgust conceals

\* Regina Sabæ coram rege crura denudavit.—*Schickelrude in Proemio Tarich Jersici, F. 65.*



cupidity. And then woman feels her weak point guarded by all that casuistry of gallantry which takes the place of scruples in prudes. It is a line of circumvallation with a ditch. Every prude puts on an air of repugnance. It is a protection. She will consent, but she disdains—for the present.

Josiana had an uneasy conscience. She felt such a leaning towards immodesty that she was a prude. The recoils of pride in the direction opposed to our vices lead us to those of a contrary nature. It was the excessive effort to be chaste which made her a prude. To be too much on the defensive points to a secret desire for attack; the shy woman is not strait-laced. She shut herself up in the arrogance of the exceptional circumstances of her rank, meditating, perhaps, all the while, some sudden lapse from it.

It was the dawn of the 18th century. England was a sketch of what France was during the regency. Walpole and Dubois are not unlike. Marlborough was fighting against his former king, James II., to whom it was said he had sold his sister, Miss Churchill. Bolingbroke was in his meridian, and Richelieu in his dawn. Gallantry found its convenience in a certain medley of ranks. Men were equalized by the same vices as they were later on, perhaps, by the same ideas. Degradation of rank, an aristocratic prelude, began what the revolution was to complete. It was not very far off the time when Jelyotte was seen publicly sitting, in broad daylight, on the bed of the Marquise d'Épinay. It is true (for manners re-echo each other) that in the 16th century Smeton's nightcap had been found under Anne Boleyn's pillow.

If the word woman signifies fault, as I forget what Council decided, never was woman so womanlike as then. Never, covering her frailty by her charms, and her weakness by her omnipotence, has she claimed absolution more imperiously. In making the forbidden the permitted fruit, Eve fell; in making the permitted the forbidden fruit she triumphs. That is the climax. In the 18th century the wife bolts out her husband. She shuts herself up in Eden with Satan. Adam is left outside.

### III.

All Josiana's instincts impelled her to yield herself gallantly, rather than to give herself legally. To surrender on the score of

gallantry implies learning, recalls Menalcaas and Amaryllis, and is almost a literary act. Mademoiselle de Scudéry, putting aside the attraction of ugliness for ugliness' sake, had no other motive for yielding to Pellisson.

The maiden a sovereign, the wife a subject, such was the old English notion. Josiana was deferring the hour of the subjection as long as she could. She must eventually marry Lord David, since such was the royal pleasure. It was a necessity, doubtless; but what a pity! Josiana appreciated Lord David, and showed him off. There was between them a tacit agreement, neither to conclude or to break off the engagement. They eluded each other. This method of making love, one step in advance, and two back, is expressed in the dancers of the period, the minuet and the gavotte.

It is unbecoming to be married—fades one's ribbons, and makes one look old. An espousal is a dreary absorption of brilliancy. A woman handed over to you by a notary, how commonplace! The brutality of marriage creates definite situations; suppresses the will; kills choice; has a syntax, like grammar; replaces inspiration by orthography; makes a dictation of love; disperses all life's mysteries; diminishes the rights both of sovereign and subject; by a turn of the scale destroys the charming equilibrium of the sexes, the one robust in bodily strength, the other all-powerful in feminine weakness: strength on one side, beauty on the other; makes one a master and the other a servant, while without marriage one is a slave, the other a queen.

To make Love prosaically decent, how gross! to deprive it of all impropriety, how dull!

Lord David was ripening, Forty; 'tis a marked period. He did not perceive this, and in truth he looked no more than thirty. He considered it more amusing to desire Josiana than to possess her. He possessed others. He had mistresses. On the other hand, Josiana had dreams.

The Duchess Josiana had a peculiarity, less rare than it is supposed. One of her eyes was blue and the other black. Her pupils were made for love and hate, for happiness and misery. Night and day was mingled in her look.

Her ambition was this; to show herself capable of impossibilities. One day she said

to Swift, "You people fancy that you know what scorn is." "You people," meant the human race.

She was a skin-deep Papist. Her Catholicism did not exceed the amount necessary for fashion. She would have been a Puseyite in the present day. She wore great dresses of velvet, satin, or moire, some composed of fifteen or sixteen yards of material, with embroideries of gold and silver; and round her waist many knots of pearls, alternating with other precious stones. She was extravagant in gold lace. Sometimes she wore an embroidered cloth jacket like a bachelor. She rode on a man's saddle, notwithstanding the invention of side-saddles, introduced into England in the 14th century by Anne, wife of Richard II. She washed her face, arms, shoulders, and neck, in sugar-candy, diluted in white of egg, after the fashion of Castile. There came over her face, after anyone had spoken wittily in her presence, a reflective smile of singular grace. She was free from malice, and rather good-natured than otherwise.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE LEADER OF FASHION.

JOSIANA was bored. The fact is so natural as to be scarcely worth mentioning.

Lord David held the position of judge in the gay life of London. He was looked up to by nobility and gentry. Let us register a glory of Lord David's. He was daring enough to wear his own hair. The reaction against the wig was beginning. Just as in 1824 Eugene Deveria was the first to allow his beard to grow, so in 1702 Prince Devereux was the first to risk wearing his own hair in public disguised by artful curling. For to risk one's hair was almost to risk one's head. The indignation was universal. Nevertheless Prince Devereux was Viscount Hereford, and a peer of England. He was insulted, and the deed was well worth the insult. In the hottest part of the row Lord David suddenly appeared without his wig and in his own hair. Such conduct shakes the foundations of society. Lord David was insulted even more than Viscount Hereford. He held his ground. Prince Devereux was the first, Lord David Dirry-

Moir the second. It is sometimes more difficult to be second than first. It requires less genius, but more courage. The first, intoxicated by the novelty, may ignore the danger; the second sees the abyss, and rushes into it. Lord David flung himself into the abyss of no longer wearing a wig. Later on these lords found imitators. Following these two revolutionists, men found sufficient audacity to wear their own hair, and powder was introduced as an extenuating circumstance.

In order to establish, before we pass on, an important period of history, we should remark that the first blow in the war of wigs was really struck by a Queen, Christina of Sweden who wore man's clothes, and had appeared in 1680, in her hair of golden brown, powdered, and brushed up from her head. She had, besides, says Misson, a slight beard. The pope, on his part, by a bull of March, 1694, had somewhat let down the wig, by taking it from the heads of bishops and priests, and in ordering churchmen to let their hair grow.

Lord David, then, did not wear a wig, and did wear cowhide boots. Such great things made him a mark for public admiration. There was not a club of which he was not the leader, not a boxing match in which he was not desired as referee. The referee is the arbitrator.

He had drawn up the rules of several clubs in high life. He founded several resorts of fashionable society, of which one, the Lady Guinea, was still in existence in Pall Mall in 1772. The Lady Guinea was a club in which all the youth of the peerage congregated. They gamed there. The lowest stake allowed was a rouleau of fifty guineas, and there was never less than 20,000 guineas on the table. By the side of each player was a little stand, on which to place his cup of tea, and a gilt bowl in which to put the rouleaux of guineas. The players, like servants when cleaning knives, wore leather sleeves to save their lace, breastplates of leather to protect their ruffles, shades on their brows to shelter their eyes from the great glare of the lamps, and, to keep their curls in order, broad-brimmed hat covered with flowers. They were masked to conceal their excitement, especially when playing the game of *quinze*. All, moreover, had their coats turned the wrong way, for luck. Lord David was a member of the

Beefsteak Club, the Surly Club, and of the Splitfarthing Club, of the Cross Club, the Scratchpenny Club, of the Sealed Knot, a Royalist Club, and of the Martinus Scriblerus, founded by Swift, to take the place of the Rota, founded by Milton.

Though handsome he belonged to the Ugly Club. This Club was dedicated to deformity. The members agreed to fight, not about a beautiful woman, but about an ugly man. The hall of the club was adorned with hideous portraits—Thersites, Triboulet, Duns, Hudibras, Scarron; over the chimney was Æsop, between two men, each blind of an eye, Cocles and Camoëns (Cocles being blind of the left, Camoëns of the right eye), so arranged that the two profiles without eyes were turned to each other. The day that the beautiful Mrs. Visart caught the small-pox, the Ugly Club toasted her. This club was still in existence in the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Mirabeau was elected an honorary member.

Since the restoration of Charles II., revolutionary clubs had been abolished. The tavern in the little street by Moorfields where the Calf's Head Club was held, had been pulled down; it was so called because on the 30th of January, the day on which the blood of Charles I. flowed on the scaffold, the members had drunk red wine out of the skull of a calf to the health of Cromwell. To the republican clubs had succeeded monarchical clubs. In them people amused themselves with decency.

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There was the Hell-fire Club, where they play at being impious. It was a joust of sacrilege. Hell was at auction there to the highest bidder in blasphemy.

There was the Butting Club, so called from its members butting folks with their heads. They found some street porter with a wide chest and a stupid countenance. They offered him, and compelled him, if necessary, to accept a pot of porter, in return for which he was to allow them to butt him with their heads four times in the chest, and on this they betted. One day a man, a great brute of a Welshman named Gogangerdd, expired at the third butt. This looked serious. An inquest was held, and the jury returned the following verdict:—"Died of an inflation of the heart, caused by excessive drinking." Gogangerdd had cer-

tainly drunk the contents of the pot of porter.

There was the Fun Club. *Fun* is like *cant* like *humor*, a word which is untranslatable. Fun is to farce what pepper is to salt. To get into a house and break a valuable mirror, slash the family portraits, poison the dog, put the cat into the aviary, is called "cutting a bit of fun." To give bad news which is untrue, whereby people put on mourning by mistake, is fun. It was fun to cut a square hole in the Holbein at Hampton Court. Fun would have been proud to have broken the arm of the Venus of Milo. Under James II. a young millionaire lord who had during the night set fire to a thatched cottage, a feat which made all London burst with laughter, was proclaimed the King of Fun. The poor devils in the cottage were saved in their night clothes. The members of the Fun Club, all of the highest aristocracy, used to run about London during the hours when the citizens were asleep, pulling the hinges from the shutters, cutting off the pipes of pumps, filling up cisterns, digging up cultivated plots of ground, putting out lamps, sawing through the beams which supported houses, breaking the window panes, especially in the poor quarters of the town. It was the rich who acted thus towards the poor. For this reason no complaint was possible. That was the best of the joke. These manners have not altogether disappeared. In many places in England, and in English possessions—at Guernsey, for instance—your house is now and then somewhat damaged during the night, or a fence is broken, or the knocker twisted off your door. If it were poor people who did these things, they would be sent to jail; but they are done by pleasant young gentlemen.

The most fashionable of the clubs was presided over by an emperor, who wore a crescent on his forehead, and was called the Grand Mohawk. The Mohawk surpassed the Fun. Do evil for evil's sake was the programme. The Mohawk Club had one great object,—to injure. To fulfil this duty, all means were held good. In becoming a Mohawk, the members took an oath to be hurtful. To injure at any price, no matter when, no matter whom, no matter where, was a matter of duty. Every member of the Mohawk Club was bound to possess an accomplishment. One was a "dancing master;" that is to say, he made the rustics frisk about

by pricking the calves of their legs with the point of his sword. Others knew how to make a man sweat; that is to say, a circle of gentlemen with drawn rapiers would surround a poor wretch, so that it was impossible for him not to turn his back upon some one. The gentleman behind him chastised him for this by a prick of his sword, which made him spring round; another prick in the back warned the fellow that one of noble blood was behind him, and so on, each one wounding him in his turn. When the man closed round by the circle of swords and covered with blood, had turned and danced about enough, they ordered their servants to beat him with sticks, to change the course of his ideas. Others "hit the lion:" that is, they gayly stopped a passenger, broke his nose with a blow of the fist, and then shoved both thumbs into his eyes. If his eyes were gouged out, he was paid for them.

Such were, towards the beginning of the eighteenth century, the pastimes of the rich idlers of London. The idlers of Paris had theirs. M. de Charolais was firing his gun at a citizen standing on his own threshold. In all times youth has had its amusements.

Lord David Dirry-Moir brought into all these institutions his magnificent and liberal spirit. Just like anyone else he would gayly set fire to a cot of woodwork and thatch, and just scorch those within; but he would rebuild their houses in stone. He insulted two ladies. One was unmarried; he gave her a portion: the other was married; he had her husband appointed chaplain.

Cockfighting owed him some praiseworthy improvements. It was marvellous to see Lord David dress a cock for the pit. Cocks lay hold of each other by the feathers, as men by the hair. Lord David therefore made his cock as bald as possible. With a pair of scissors he cut off all the feathers from the tail and from the head to the shoulders, and all those on the neck. So much less for the enemy's beak, he used to say. Then he extended the cock's wings, and cut each feather, one after another, to a point, and thus the wings were furnished with darts. So much for the enemy's eyes he would say. Then he scraped its claws with a penknife, sharpened its nails, fitted it with spurs of sharp steel, spat on its head, spat on its neck, anointed it with spittle, as they used to rub oil over athletes; then set it down in the pit, a redoubtable

champion, exclaiming, "That's how to make a cock an eagle, and a bird of the poultry yard a bird of the mountain."

Lord David attended prize-fights, and was their living law. On occasions of great performances it was he who had the stakes driven in, and the ropes stretched, and who fixed the number of feet for the ring. When he was a second, he followed his man step by step, a bottle in one hand, a sponge in the other, crying out to him to *hit hard*, suggesting strategems, advising him as he fought, wiping away the blood, raising him when overthrown, placing him on his knee, putting the mouth of the bottle between his teeth, and from his own mouth, filled with water, blowing a fine rain into his eyes and ears; a thing which re-animates even a dying man. If he was referee, he saw that there was no foul play, prevented anyone, whosoever he might be, from assisting the combatants, excepting the seconds, declared the man beaten who did not fairly face his opponent, watched that the time between the rounds did not exceed half a minute, prevented butting, and declared whoever resorted to it beaten, and forbade a man's being hit when down. All this science, however, did not render him a pedant, nor destroy his ease of manner in society.

When he was referee, rough, pimple-faced, unshorn friends of either combatant never dared to come to the aid of their failing man, nor in order to upset the chances of the betting, jumped over the barrier, entered the ring, broke the ropes, pulled down the stakes, and violently interposed in the battle. Lord David was one of the few referees whom they dared not thrash.

No one could train like him. The pugilist whose trainer he consented to become was sure to win. Lord David would choose a Hercules—massive as a rock, tall as a tower—and make him his child. The problem was to turn that human rock from a defensive to an offensive state. In this he excelled. Having once adopted the Cyclops, he never left him. He became his nurse; he measured out his wine, weighed his meat, and counted his hours of sleep. It was he who invented the athlete's admirable rules, afterwards reproduced by Morely. In the mornings, a raw egg and a glass of sherry; at twelve, some slices of a leg of mutton, almost raw, with tea; at four, toast and tea; in the evening, pale ale and toast; after which he un-

dressed his man, rubbed him, and put him to bed. In the street, he never allowed him to leave his sight, keeping him out of every danger, runaway horses, the wheels of carriages, drunken soldiers, pretty girls. He watched over his virtue. This maternal solicitude continually brought some new perfection into the pupil's education. He taught him the blow with the fist which breaks the teeth, and the twist of the thumb which gouges out the eye. What could be more touching?

Thus he was preparing himself for public life to which he was to be called later on. It is no easy matter to become an accomplished gentleman.

Lord David Diry-Moir was passionately fond of open-air exhibitions, of shows, of circuses with wild beasts, of the caravans of mountebanks, of clowns, tumblers, merry-men, open-air farces, and the wonders of a fair. The true noble is he who smacks of the people. Therefore it was that Lord David frequented the taverns and low haunts of London and the Cinque Ports. In order to be able at need, and without compromising his rank in the white squadron, to be cheek-by-jowl with a topman or a calker, he used to wear a sailor's jacket when he went into the slums. For such disguise, his not wearing a wig was convenient; for even under Louis XIV. the people kept to their hair like the lion to his mane. This gave him great freedom of action. The low people whom Lord David used to meet in the stews, and with whom he mixed, held him in high esteem, without ever dreaming that he was a lord. They called him Tom-Jim-Jack. Under this name he was famous and very popular amongst the dregs of the people. He played the blackguard in a masterly style: when necessary, he used his fists. This phase of his fashionable life was highly appreciated by Lady Josiana.

## CHAPTER V.

### QUEEN ANNE.

ABOVE this couple there was Anne, Queen of England. An ordinary woman was Queen Anne. She was gay, kindly, august—to a certain extent. No quality of hers attained to virtue, none to vice. Her stoutness was bloated; her fun, heavy; her good-nature,

stupid. She was stubborn and weak. As a wife, she was faithless and faithful, having favorites to whom she gave up her heart, and a husband for whom she kept her bed. As a Christian, she was a heretic and a bigot. She had one beauty—the well-developed neck of a Niobe. The rest of her person was indifferently formed. She was a clumsy coquette, and a chaste one. Her skin was white and fine; she displayed a great deal of it. It was she who introduced the fashion of necklaces of large pearls clasped round the throat. She had a narrow forehead, sensual lips, fleshy cheeks, large eyes, short sight. Her short sight extended to her mind. Beyond a burst of merriment now and then, almost as ponderous as her anger, she lived in a sort of taciturn grumble and a grumbling silence. Words escaped from her which had to be guessed at. She was a mixture of a good woman and a mischievous devil. She liked surprises, which is extremely woman-like. Anne was a pattern—just sketched roughly—of the universal Eve. To that sketch had fallen that chance, the throne. She drank. Her husband was a Dane, thorough-bred. A Tory, she governed by the Whigs; like a woman, like a mad woman. She had fits of rage. She was violent, a brawler. Nobody more awkward than Anne in directing affairs of state. She allowed events to fall about as they might chance. Her whole policy was cracked. She excelled in bringing about great catastrophes from little causes. When a whim of authority took hold of her, she called it giving a stir with the poker. She would say with an air of profound thought, “No peer may keep his hat on before the king except De Courcy, Baron Kingsale, an Irish peer.” Or, “It would be an injustice were my husband not to be Lord High Admiral, since my father was.” And she made George of Denmark High Admiral of England and of all her majesty's plantations. She was perpetually perspiring bad humor; she did not explain her thought, she exuded it. There was something of the Sphinx in this goose.

She rather liked fun, teasing, and practical jokes. Could she have made Apollo a hunchback, it would have delighted her. But she would have left him a god. Good-natured, her ideal was to allow none to despair, and to worry all. She had often a rough word in her mouth; a little more, and

she would have sworn like Elizabeth. From time to time she would take from a man's pocket, which she wore in her skirt, a little round box, of chased silver, on which was her portrait, in profile, between the two letters Q. A.; she would open this box, and take from it, on her finger, a little pomade, with which she reddened her lips; and, having colored her mouth, would laugh. She was greedily fond of the flat Zealand gingerbread cakes. She was proud of being fat.

More of a Puritan than anything else, she would, nevertheless, have liked to devote herself to stage plays. She had an absurd academy of music, copied after that of France. In 1700 a Frenchman, named Forteroche, wanted to build a royal circus at Paris, at a cost of 400,000 francs, which scheme was opposed by D'Argenson. This Forteroche passed into England, and proposed to Queen Anne, who was immediately charmed by the idea, to build in London a theatre with machinery, with a fourth under-stage finer than that of the King of France. Like Louis XIV., she liked to be driven at a gallop. Her teams and relays would sometimes do the distance between London and Windsor in less than an hour and a quarter.

## II.

In Anne's time, no meeting was allowed without the permission of two justices of the peace. The assembly of twelve persons, were it only to eat oysters and drink porter, was a felony. Under her reign, otherwise relatively mild, pressing for the fleet was carried on with extreme violence: a gloomy evidence that the Englishman is a subject rather than a citizen. For centuries England suffered under that process of tyranny which gave the lie to all the old charters of freedom, and out of which France especially gathered a cause of triumph and indignation. What in some degree diminishes the triumph is, that while sailors were pressed in England, soldiers were pressed in France. In every great town of France, any able-bodied man, going through the streets on his business, was liable to be shoved by the crimps into a house called the oven. There he was shut up with others in the same plight, those fit for service were picked out, and the recruiters sold them to the officers. In 1695, there were thirty of these ovens in Paris.

The laws against Ireland, emanating from

Queen Anne, were atrocious. Anne was born in 1664, two years before the great fire of London, on which the astrologers (there were some left, and Louis XIV. was born with the assistance of an astrologer, and swaddled in a horoscope) predicted that being the elder sister of fire, she would be queen. And so she was, thanks to astrology and the revolution of 1688. She had the humiliation of having only Gilbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, for god-father. To be god-child of the Pope was no longer possible in England. A mere primate is but a poor sort of god-father. Anne had to put up with one, however. It was her own fault. Why was she a Protestant?

Denmark had paid for her virginity (*virginitas empta*, as the old charters expressed it) by a dowry of 6,250*l.* a year, secured on the bailiwick of Wardinburg and the island of Fehmarn. Anne followed, without conviction, and by routine, the traditions of William. The English under that royalty born of a revolution, possessed as much liberty as they could lay hands on between the Tower of London, into which they put orators, and the pillory, into which they put writers. Anne spoke a little Danish in her private chats with her husband, and a little French in her private chats with Bolingbroke. Wretched gibberish; but the height of English fashion, especially at Court, was to talk French. There was never a *bon mot* but in French. Anne paid a deal of attention to her coins, especially to copper coins, which are the low and popular ones; she wanted to cut a great figure on them. Six farthings were struck during her reign. On the back of the first three she had merely a throne struck; on the the back of the fourth she ordered a triumphal chariot, and on the back of the sixth a goddess holding a sword in one hand and an olive branch in the other, with the scroll, *Bello et pace*. Her father, James II., was candid and cruel: she was brutal.

At the same time she was mild at bottom. A contradiction which only appears such. A fit of anger metamorphosed her. Heat sugar and it will boil.

Anne was popular. England like feminine rulers. Why? France excludes them. There is a reason at once. Perhaps there is no other. With England historians Elizabeth embodies grandeur, Ann, good-nature. As they will.

Be it so. But there is nothing delicate in the reigns of these women. The lines are heavy. It is gross grandeur and gross good-nature. As to their immaculate virtue, England is tenacious of it, and we are not going to oppose the idea. Elizabeth was a virgin tempered by Essex; Anne, a wife complicated by Bolingbroke.

### III.

One idiotic habit of the people is to attribute to the king what they do themselves. They fight. Whose the glory? The king's. They pay. Whose the generosity? The king's. Then the people love him for being so rich. The king receives a crown from the poor, and returns them a farthing. How generous he is! The colossus which is the pedestal contemplates the pigmy which is the statue. How great is this myrmidon! he is on my back. A dwarf has an excellent way of being taller than a giant; it is to perch himself on his shoulders. But that the giant should allow it, there is the wonder—And that he should admire the height of the dwarf, there is the folly. Simplicity of mankind! The equestrian statue, reserved for kings alone, is an excellent figure of royalty: the horse is the people. Only that the horse becomes transfigured by degrees. It begins in an ass; it ends in a lion. Then it throws its rider, and you have 1642 in England and 1789 in France; and sometimes it devours him, and you have in England 1649, and in France 1793. That the lion should relapse into the donkey is astonishing; but it is so. This was occurring in England. It had resumed the pack-saddle, idolatry of the crown. Queen Anne, as we have just observed, was popular. What was she doing to be so? Nothing. Nothing!—that is all that is asked of the sovereign of England. He receives for that nothing 1,250,000*l.* a year. In 1705, England which had had but thirteen men of war under Elizabeth, and thirty-six under James I., counted a hundred and fifty in her fleet. The English had three armies, 5,000 men in Catalonia; 10,000 in Portugal; 50,000 in Flanders; and besides, was paying 1,666,666*l.* a year to monarchical and diplomatic Europe, a sort of prostitute the English people has always had in keeping. Parliament having voted a patriotic loan of thirty-four million francs of annuities, there had been a crash at the exchequer to sub-

scribe it. England was sending a squadron to the West of Spain, under Admiral Leake, without mentioning the reserve of four hundred sail, under Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel. England had lately annexed Scotland. It was the interval between Hochstadt and Ramilies, and the first of these victories was foretelling the second. England, in its cast of the net at Hochstadt, had made prisoners of twenty-seven battalions and four regiments of dragoons, and deprived France of one hundred leagues of country—France drawing back dismayed from the Danube to the Rhine.

England was stretching her hand out towards Sardinia and the Balearic Islands. She was bringing into her ports in triumph ten Spanish line-of-battle ships, and many a galleon laden with gold. Hudson's Bay and Straits were already half given over by Louis XIV. It was felt that he was about to give up his hold over Acadia, St. Christopher's, and Newfoundland, and that he would be but too happy if England would only tolerate the King of France, fishing for Cod at Cape Breton. England was about to impose upon him the shame of demolishing himself the fortifications of Dunkirk. Meanwhile, she had taken Gibraltar, and was taking Barcelona. What great things accomplished! How was it possible to refuse Anne admiration for taking the trouble of living at the period?

From a certain point of view, the reign of Anne appears a reflection of the reign of Louis XIV. Anne, for a moment even with that king in the race which is called history, bears to him the vague resemblance of a reflection. Like him, she plays at a great reign; she has her monuments, her hearts, her victories, her captains, her men of letters, her privy purse to pension celebrities, her gallery of chefs-d'œuvre, side by side with those of his majesty. Her court, too, was a cortège, with the features of a triumph, an order and a march. It was a miniature copy of all the great men of Versailles, not giants themselves. In it there is enough to deceive the eye; add God save the Queen, which might have been taken from Lulli, and the ensemble becomes an illusion. Not a personage is missing. Christopher Wren is a very passable Mansard; Somers is as good as Lamoignon; Anne has a Racine in Dryden, a Boileau in Pope, a Colbert in Godolphin, a Louvois in Pembroke, and a Turenne in Marlborough. Heighten

the wigs and lower the foreheads. The whole is solemn and pompous, and the Windsor of the time has a faded resemblance to Marly. Still the whole was effeminate, and Anne's Père Tellier was called Sarah Jennings. However, there is an outline of incipient irony, which fifty years latter was to turn philosophy, in the literature of the age, and the Protestant Tartuffe is unmasked by Swift, just in the same way as the Catholic Tartuffe is denounced by Molière. Although the England of the period quarrels and fights France, she imitates her and draws enlightenment from her; and the light on the façade of England is French light. It is a pity that Anne's reign lasted but twelve years, or the English would not hesitate to call it the century of Anne, as we say the century of Louis XIV. Anne appeared in 1702, as Louis XIV. declined. It is one of the curiosities of history, that the rise of that pale planet coincides with the setting of the planet of purple, and that at the moment in which France had the king Sun, England should have had the queen Moon,

A detail to be noted. Louis XIV., although they made war upon him, was greatly admired in England. "He is the kind of king they want in France," said the English. The love of the English for their own liberty is mingled with a certain acceptance of servitude for others. That favorable regard of the chains which bind their neighbors, sometimes attains to enthusiasm for the despot next door.

To sum up, Anne rendered her people *heureux*, as the French translator of Beeverell's book repeats three times, with graceful reiteration at the sixth and ninth page of his dedication, and the third of his preface.

#### IV.

Queen Anne bore a little grudge to the Duchess Josiana, for two reasons. Firstly, because she thought the Duchess Josiana handsome. Secondly, because she thought the Duchess Josiana's betrothed handsome. Two reasons for jealousy are sufficient for a woman. One is sufficient for a queen. Let us add that she bore her a grudge for being her sister. Anne did not like women to be pretty. She considered it against good morals. As for herself, she was ugly. Not from choice, however. A part of her religion she derived from that ugliness. Josiana, beautiful and

philosophical, was a cause of vexation to the queen. To an ugly queen, a pretty duchess is not an agreeable sister.

There was another grievance, Josiana's improper birth. Anne was the daughter of Anne Hyde, a simple gentlewoman, legitimately, but vexatiously, married by James II, when Duke of York. Anne, having this inferior blood in her veins, felt herself but half royal, and Josiana, having come into the world quite irregularly, drew closer attention to the incorrectness, less great, but really existing, in the birth of the queen. The daughter of *mésalliance* looked without love, upon the daughter of bastardy, so near her. It was an unpleasant resemblance. Josiana had a right to say to Anne, "My mother was at least as good as yours." At court no one said so, but they evidently thought it. This was a bore for Her Royal Majesty. Why this Josiana? What had put it into her head to be born? What good was a Josiana? Certain relationships are detrimental. Nevertheless, Anne smiled on Josiana. Perhaps she might even have liked her, had she not been her sister.

#### CHAPTER VI.

##### BARKILPHEDRO.

It is useful to know what people do, and a certain surveillance is wise. Josiana had Lord David watched by a little creature of hers, in whom she reposed confidence, and whose name was Barkilphedro.

Lord David had Josiana discreetly observed by a creature of his, of whom he was sure, and whose name was Barkilphedro.

Queen Anne on her part, kept herself secretly informed of the actions and conduct of the Duchess Josiana, her bastard sister, and of Lord David, her future brother-in-law by the left hand, by a creature of hers, on whom she counted fully, and whose name was Barkilphedro.

This Barkilphedro had his fingers on that key-board—Josiana, Lord David, a queen. A man between two women. What modulations possible! What amalgamation of souls!

Barkilphedro had not always held the magnificent position of whispering into three ears.

He was an old servant of the Duke of York. He had tried to be a churchman, but



had failed. The Duke of York, an English and a Roman prince, compounded of royal Popery and legal Anglicanism, had his Catholic house and his Protestant house, and might have pushed Barkilphedro in one or the other hierarchy; but he did not judge him to be Catholic enough to make him almoner, or Protestant enough to make him chaplain. So that between two religions, Barkilphedro found himself with his soul on the ground.

Not a bad posture, either, for certain reptile souls.

Certain ways are impracticable, except by crawling flat on the belly.

An obscure but fattening servitude had long made up Barkilphedro's whole existence. Service is something; but he wanted power besides. He was, perhaps, about to reach it when James II. fell. He had to begin all over again. Nothing to do under William III., a sullen prince, and exercising in his mode of reigning a prudery which he believed to be probity. Barkilphedro, when his protector, James II., was dethroned, did not lapse all at once into rags. There is a something which survives deposed princes, and which feeds and sustains their parasites. The remains of the exhaustible sap causes leaves to live on for two or three days on the branches of the uprooted tree; then, all at once, the leaf yellows and dries up: and thus it is with the courtier.

Thanks to that embalming which is called legitimacy, the prince himself, although fallen and cast away, lasts and keeps preserved; it is not so with the courtier, much more dead than the king. The king, beyond there, is a mummy; the courtier, here, is a phantom. To be the shadow of a shadow, is leanness indeed. Hence Barkilphedro became famished. Then he took up the character of a man of letters.

But he was thrust back even from the kitchens. Sometimes he knew not where to sleep. "Who will give me shelter?" he would ask. He struggled on. All that is interesting in patience in distress he possessed. He had, besides, the talent of the termite—knowing how to bore a hole from the bottom to the top. By dint of making use of the name of James II., of old memories, of fables of fidelity, of touching stories, he pierced as far as the Duchess Josiana's heart.

Josiana took a liking to this man of poverty and wit, an interesting combination. She presented him to Lord Dirry-Moir, gave him a shelter in the servants' hall among her domestics, retained him in her household, was kind to him, and sometimes even spoke to him. Barkilphedro felt neither hunger nor cold again. Josiana addressed him in the second person; it was the fashion for great ladies to do so to men of letters, who allowed it. The Marquis de Mailly received Roy, whom she had never seen before, in bed, and said to him, "*C'est toi qui as fait l'Année galante! Bonjour.*" Later on, the men of letters returned the custom. The day came when Fabre d'Eglantine said to the Duchesse de Rohan, "*N'est-tu pas la Chabot?*"

For Barkilphedro to be "thee'd" and "thou'd" was a success; he was overjoyed by it. He had aspired to this contemptuous familiarity. "Lady Josiana thees-and-thous me," he would say to himself. And he would rub his hands. He profited by this theeing-and-thouing to make further way. He became a sort of constant attendant in Josiana's private rooms; in no way troublesome; unperceived; the duchess would almost have changed her shift before him. All this, however, was precarious. Barkilphedro was aiming at a position. A duchess was half-way; an underground passage which did not lead to the queen was having bored for nothing.

One day Barkilphedro said to Josiana,—

"Would your Grace like to make my fortune?"

"What dost thou want?"

"An appointment."

"An appointment? for thee!"

"Yes, Madam."

"What an idea! *thou* to ask for an appointment! thou, who art good for nothing."

"That's just the reason."

Josiana burst out laughing.

"Among the offices to which thou art unsuited, which dost thou desire?"

"That of cork-drawer of the bottles of the ocean."

Josiana's laughter redoubled.

"What meanest thou? Thou art fooling."

"No, madam."

"To amuse myself, I shall answer you seriously," said the duchess. "What dost thou wish to be? Repeat it."

"Uncorker of the bottles of the ocean."

"Everything is possible at court. Is there an appointment of that kind?"

"Yes, madam?"

"This is news to me. Go on."

"There is such an appointment."

"Swear it on the soul which thou dost not possess."

"I swear it."

"I do not believe thee."

"Thank you, madam."

"Then thou wishest?—Begin again."

"To uncork the bottles of the ocean."

"That is a situation which can give little trouble. It is like grooming a bronze horse."

"Very nearly."

"Nothing to do. Well 'tis a situation to suit thee. Thou art good for that much."

"You see I am good for something."

"Come! thou art talking nonsense. Is there such an appointment?"

Barkilphedro assumed an attitude of deferential gravity. "Madam, you had an august father, James II., the king, and you have an illustrious brother-in-law, George of Denmark, Duke of Cumberland; your father was, and your brother is, Lord High Admiral of England——"

"Is what thou tellest me fresh news? I know all that as well as thou?"

"But here is what your Grace does not know. In the sea there are three kinds of things: those at the bottom, *lagan*; those which float, *flotsam*; those which the sea throws up on the shore, *jetsam*."

"And then?"

"These three things—*lagan*, *flotsam*, and *jetsam*—belong to the Lord High Admiral."

"And then?"

"Your Grace understands."

"No."

"All that is in the sea, all that sinks, all that floats, all that is cast ashore—all belongs to the Admiral of England."

"Everything! Really? And then?"

"Except the sturgeon, which belongs to the king."

"I should have thought," said Josiana, "all that would have belonged to Neptune,"

"Neptune is a fool. He has given up everything. He has allowed the English to take everything."

"Finish what thou wert saying."

"'Prizes of the sea' is the name given to such *treasure trove*."

"Be it so."

"It is boundless: there is always something floating, something being cast up. It is the contribution of the sea—the tax which the ocean pays to England."

"With all my heart. But pray conclude."

"Your Grace understands that in this way the ocean creates a department."

"Where?"

"At the Admiralty."

"What department?"

"The Sea Prize Department."

"Well?"

"The department is subdivided into three offices,—*Lagan*, *Flotsam*, and *Jetsam*,—and in each there is an officer."

"And then?"

"A ship at sea writes to give notice on an subject to those on land;—that it is sailing in such a latitude,—that it has met a sea monster,—that it is in sight of shore,—that it is in distress,—that it is about to founder—that it is lost, etc. The captain takes a bottle, puts into it a bit of paper on which he has written the information, corks up the flask, and casts it into the sea. If the bottle goes to the bottom, it is in the department of the *lagan* officer; if it floats, it is in the department of the *flotsam* officer; if it be thrown upon shore, it concerns the *jetsam* officer."

"And wouldst thou like to be the *jetsam* officer?"

"Precisely so."

"And that is what thou callest uncorking the bottles of the ocean?"

"Since there is such an appointment."

"Why dost thou wish for the last-name place in preference to both the others?"

"Because it is vacant just now."

"In what does the appointment consist?"

"Madam, in 1598 a tarred bottle, picked up by a man, conger-fishing on the strand of Epidium Promontorium, was brought to Queen Elizabeth; and a parchment drawn out of it, gave information to England that Holland had taken, without saying anything about it, an unknown country, Nova Zembla; that the capture had taken place in June 1596; that in that country people were eaten by bears; and that the manner of passing the winter was described on a paper enclosed in a musket-case hanging in the chimney of the wooden house built in the island, and left by the Dutchmen, who were all dead: and that

the chimney was built of a barrel with the end knocked out, sunk into the roof."

"I don't understand much of thy rignamole."

"Be it so. Elizabeth understood. A country the more for Holland was a country the less for England. The bottle which had given the information was held to be of importance; and thenceforward an order was issued that anybody who should find a sealed bottle on the seashore should take it to the Lord High Admiral of England, under pain of the gallows. The Admiral entrusts the opening of such bottles to an officer, who presents the contents to the Queen, if there be reason for so doing.

"Are many such bottles brought to the Admiralty?"

"But few. But it's all the same. The appointment exists. There is for the office a room and lodgings at the Admiralty."

"And for that way of doing nothing, how is one paid?"

"One hundred guineas a year."

"And thou wouldst trouble me for that much?"

"It is enough to live upon."

"Like a beggar."

"As it becomes one of my sort."

"One hundred guineas! It's a bagatelle."

"What keeps you for a minute, keeps us for a year. That's the advantage of the poor."

"Thou shalt have the place."

A week afterwards, thanks to Josiana's exertions, thanks to the influence of Lord David Dirry-Moir, Barkilphedro—safe thenceforward, drawn out of his precarious existence, lodged, and boarded, with a salary of a hundred guineas—was installed at the Admiralty.

## CHAPTER VII.

### BARKILPHEDRO GNAWS HIS WAY.

THERE is one thing the most pressing of all: to be ungrateful.

Barkilphedro was not wanting therein.

Having received so many benefits from Josiana, he had naturally but one thought,—to revenge himself on her. When we add that Josiana was beautiful, great, young, rich, powerful, illustrious, while Barkilphedro was ugly, little, old, poor, dependent, obscure; he

must necessarily revenge himself for all this as well.

When a man is made out of night, how is he to forgive so many beams of light?

Barkilphedro was an Irishman who had denied Ireland—a bad species.

Barkilphedro had but one thing in his favor,—that he had a very big belly. A big belly passes for a sign of kind-heartedness. But his belly was but an addition to Barkilphedro's hypocrisy; for the man was full of malice.

What was Barkilphedro's age? None. The age necessary for his project of the moment. He was old in his wrinkles and grey hairs, young in the activity of his mind. He was active and ponderous; a sort of hippopotamus-monkey. A royalist, certainly; a republican—who knows? a Catholic, perhaps a Protestant, without doubt. For Stuart, probably; for Brunswick, evidently. To be For, is a power only on the condition of being at the same time Against. Barkilphedro practised this wisdom.

The appointment of drawer of the bottles of the ocean was not as absurd as Barkilphedro had appeared to make out. The complaints, which would in these times be termed declamations, of Carcia Fernandez in his "Chart-Book of the Sea," against the robbery of jetsam, called right of wreck, and against the pillage of wreck by the inhabitants of the coast, had created a sensation in England, and obtained for the ship-wrecked this reform—that their goods, chattels, and property, instead of being stolen by the country-people, were confiscated by the Lord High Admiral. All the *débris* of the sea cast upon the English shore—merchandise, broken hulls of ships, bales, chests, etc.—belonged to the Lord High Admiral; but—and here was revealed the importance of the place asked for by Barkilphedro—the floating receptacles containing messages and declarations awakened particularly the attention of the Admiralty. Shipwrecks are one of England's gravest cares. Navigation being her life, shipwreck is her anxiety. England is kept in perpetual care by the sea. The little glass bottle thrown to the waves by the doomed ship, contains final intelligence, precious from every point of view. Intelligence concerning the ship, intelligence concerning the crew, intelligence concerning the place, the time, the manner of loss, intelligence concerning

the winds which have broken up the vessel, intelligence concerning the currents which bore the floating flask ashore. The situation filled by Barkilphedro has been abolished more than a century, but it had its real utility. The last holder was William Hussey, of Doddington, in Lincolnshire. The man who held it was a sort of guardian of the things of the sea. All the closed and sealed-up vessels, bottles, flasks, jars, thrown upon the English coast by the tide, were brought to him. He alone had the right to open them; he was first in the secrets of their contents; he put them in order, and ticketed them with his signature. The expression "*loger un papier au greffe*," still used in the Channel Islands is thence derived. However, one precaution was certainly taken. Not one of these bottles could be unsealed except in the presence of two jurors of the Admiralty sworn to secrecy, who signed, conjointly with the holder of the jetsam office, the official report of the opening. But these jurors being held to secrecy, there resulted for Barkilphedro a certain discretionary latitude; it depended upon him, to a certain extent, to suppress a fact or bring it to light.

These fragile floating messages were far from being what Barkilphedro had told Josiana, rare and insignificant. Sometimes they reached land with little delay; at others, after many years. That depended on the winds and the currents. The fashion of casting bottles on the surface of the sea has somewhat passed away, like that of vowing offerings, but in those religious times, those who were about to die were glad thus to send their last thought to God and to man, and at times these messages from the sea were plentiful at the Admiralty. A parchment preserved in the hall at Audlyene (ancient spelling), with notes by the Earl of Suffolk, Grand Treasurer of England under James I., bears witness that in the one year, 1615, fifty-two flasks, bladders, and tarred vessels, containing mention of sinking ships, were brought and registered in the records of the Lord High Admiral.

Court appointments are the drop of oil in the widow's cruse, they ever increase. Thus it is that the porter has become chancellor, and the groom, constable. The special officer charged with the appointment desired and obtained by Barkilphedro, was invariably a confidential man. Elizabeth had wished

that it should be so. At court, to speak of confidence is to speak of intrigue, and to speak of intrigue is to speak of advancement. This functionary had come to be a personage of some consideration. He was a clerk, and ranked directly after the two grooms of the almonry. He had the right of entrance into the palace, but we must add, what was called the humble entrance—*humilis introitus*—and even into the bed-chamber. For it was the custom that he should inform the monarch, on occasions of sufficient importance, of the objects found, which were often very curious: the wills of men in despair—farewells cast to fatherland, revelations of falsified logs, bills of lading, and crimes committed at sea, legacies to the crown, etc., that he should maintain his records in communication with the court, and should account, from time to time, to the king or queen, concerning the opening of these ill-omened bottles. It was the black cabinet of the ocean.

Elizabeth, who was always glad of an opportunity of speaking Latin, used to ask Tonfield, of Coley in Berkshire, jetsam officer of her day, when he brought her one of these papers cast up by the sea—"Quid mihi scribit Neptunus?" (What does Neptune write me?)

The way had been eaten, the insects had succeeded. Barkilphedro approached the queen.

This was all he wanted.

To make his fortune?

No.

To unmake that of others?

A greater happiness.

To hurt is to enjoy.

To have within one the desire of injuring, vague but implacable, and never to lose sight of it, is not given to all.

Barkilphedro possessed that fixity of intention.

As the bulldog holds on with his jaws, so did his thought.

To feel himself inexorable gave him a depth of gloomy satisfaction. As long as he had a prey under his teeth, or in his soul, a certainty of evil-doing, he wanted nothing.

He was happy, shivering in the cold which his neighbor was suffering. To be malignant is an opulence. Such a man is believed to be poor, and, in truth, is so; but he has all his riches in malice, and prefers having

them so. Everything is in what contents one. To do a bad turn, which is the same as a good turn, is better than money. Bad for him who endures, good for him who does it. Catesby, the colleague of Guy Fawkes, in the Popish powder plot, said: "To see parliament blown upside down, I wouldn't miss it for a million sterling."

What was Barkilphedro? That meanest and most terrible of things—an envious man.

Envy is a thing ever easily placed at court.

Courts abound in impertinent people, in idlers, in rich loungers hungering for gossip, in those who seek for needles in trusses of hay, in triflers, in banterers bantered, in witty ninnies, who cannot do without converse with an envious man.

What a refreshing thing is the evil spoken to you of others.

Envy is good stuff to make a spy. There is a profound analogy between that natural passion, envy, and that social function, espionage. The spy hunts on others' account, like the dog. The envious man hunts on his own, like the cat.

A fierce Myself, such is the envious man.

He had other qualities. Barkilphedro was discreet, secret, concrete. He kept in everything and racked himself with his hate. Enormous baseness implies enormous vanity. He was liked by those whom he amused, and hated by all others; but he felt that he was disdained by those who hated him, and despised by those who liked him. He restrained himself. All his gall simmered noiselessly in his hostile resignation. He was indignant, as if rogues had the right to be so. He was the furies' silent prey. To swallow everything was his talent. There were deaf wraths within him, frenzies of interior rage, black and brooding flames unseen; he was a *smoke-consuming* man of passion. The surface was smiling. He was kind, prompt, easy, amiable, obliging. Never mind to whom, never mind where, he bowed. For a breath of wind he inclined to the earth. What a source of fortune to have a reed for a spine! Such concealed and venomous beings are not so rare as is believed. We live surrounded by ill-omened crawling things. Wherefore the malevolent? A keen question! The dreamer constantly proposes it to himself, and the thinker never resolves it. Hence the sad eye of the philosophers ever fixed upon that mountain of darkness which is destiny, and from the top of which

the colossal spectre of evil casts handfuls of serpents over the earth.

Barkilphedro's body was obese, and his face lean. A fat bust and a bony countenance. His nails were channelled and short, his fingers knotted, his thumbs flat, his hair coarse, his temples wide apart, and his forehead a murderer's, broad and low. The littleness of his eye was hidden under his bushy eyebrows. His nose long, sharp, and flabby, nearly met his mouth. Barkilphedro, properly attired as an emperor, would have somewhat resembled Domitian. His face of muddy yellow might have been modelled in slimy paste—his immovable cheeks were like putty; he had all kinds of ugly refractory wrinkles; the angle of his jaw was massive, his chin heavy, his ear underbred. In repose, and seen in profile, his upper lip was raised at an acute angle, showing two teeth. Those teeth seemed to look at you. The teeth can look, just as the eye can bite.

Patience, temperance, continence, reserve, self-control, amenity, deference, gentleness, politeness, sobriety, chastity, completed and finished Barkilphedro. He calumniated those virtues by their possession.

In a short time Barkilphedro took a foothold at court.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### INFERI.

THERE are two ways of making a footing at court. In the clouds, and you are august; in the mud, and you are powerful.

In the first case, you belong to Olympus.

In the second case you belong to the private closet.

He who belongs to Olympus has but the thunderbolt, he who is of the private closet has the police.

The private closet contains all the instruments of government, and sometimes, for it is a traitor, its chastisement. Heliogabalus goes there to die. Then it is called the latrines.

Generally it is less tragic. It is there that Alberoni admires Vendôme. Royal personages willingly make it their place of audience. It takes the place of the throne. Louis XIV. receives the Duchess of Burgundy there. Philip V. is shoulder to shoulder there with the queen. The priest penetrates into it.

The private closet is sometimes a branch of the confessional. Therefore it is that at court there are underground fortunes—not always the least. If, under Louis XI., you would be great, be Pierre de Rohan, Marshal of France; if you would be influential, be Olivier le Daim, the barber; if you would, under Mary Medicis, be glorious, be Sillery, the Chancellor; if you would be a person of consideration, be La Hannon, the maid; if you would, under Louis XV., be illustrious, be Choiseul, the minister; if you would be formidable, be Lebel, the valet. Given, Louis XIV., Bontemps, who makes his bed, is more powerful than Louvois who raises his armies, and Turenne who gains his victories. From Richelieu, take Père Joseph, and you have Richelieu nearly empty. There is the mystery the less. His eminence in scarlet is magnificent; his eminence in gray is terrible. What power in being a worm! All the Narvaez amalgamated with all the O'Donnells do less work than one Sör Patrocinio.

Of course, the condition of this power is littleness. If you would remain powerful, remain petty. Be Nothingness. The serpent in repose, twisted into a circle, is a figure at the same time of the infinite and of naught.

One of these viper-like fortunes had fallen to Barkilphedro.

He had crawled where he wanted.

Flat beasts can get in everywhere. Louis XIV. had bugs in his bed and Jesuits in his policy.

The incompatibility is nil.

In this world everything is a clock. To gravitate is to oscillate. One pole is attracted to the other. Francis I. is attracted by Triboulet; Louis XIV. is attracted by Lebel. There exists a deep affinity between extreme elevation and extreme debasement.

It is abasement which directs. Nothing is easier of comprehension. It is he who is below who pulls the strings. No position more convenient. He is the eye, and has the ear. He is the eye of the government: he has the ear of the king. To have the eye of the king, is to draw and shut, at one's whim, the bolt of the royal conscience, and to throw into that conscience whatever one wishes. The mind of the king is his cupboard; if he be a rag-picker, it is his basket. The ears of kings belong not to kings, and therefore it is that, on the whole, the poor devils are not

altogether responsible for their actions. He who does not possess his own thought, does not possess his own deed. A king obeys—what? Any evil spirit buzzing from outside in his ear; a noisome fly of the abyss.

This buzzing commands. A reign is a dictation.

The loud voice is the sovereign; the low voice, sovereignty. Those who know how to distinguish, in a reign, this low voice, and to hear whispers to the loud, are the real historians.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HATE IS AS STRONG AS LOVE.

QUEEN ANNE had several of these low voices about her. Barkilphedro was one.

Besides the queen, he secretly worked, influenced, and plotted upon Lady Josiana and Lord David. As we have said, he whispered in three ears, one more than Dangeau. Dangeau whispered in but two, in the days when, thrusting himself between Louis XIV., in love with Henrietta, his sister-in-law, and Henrietta, in love with Louis XIV., her brother-in-law, he being Louis's secretary, without the knowledge of Henrietta, and Henrietta's without the knowledge of Louis, he wrote the questions and answers of both the love-making marionettes.

Barkilphedro was so cheerful, so accepting, so incapable of taking up the defence of anybody, possessing so little devotion at bottom, so ugly, so mischievous, that it was quite natural that a regal personage should come to be unable to do without it. Once Anne had tasted Barkilphedro she would have no other flatterer. He flattered her as they flattered Louis the Great, by stinging her neighbors. "The king being ignorant," says Madame de Montchevreuil, "one is obliged to mock at the savants."

To poison the sting, from time to time, is the acme of art. Nero loves to see Locusta at work.

Royal palaces are very easily entered; these madrepores have a way in soon guessed at, contrived, examined, and scooped out at need by the gnawing thing which is called the courtier. A pretext to enter is sufficient. Barkilphedro, having found this pretext, his position with the queen soon became the same as that with the Duchess Josiana—that

of an indispensable domestic animal. A witticism risked one day by him immediately led to his perfect understanding of the queen and how to estimate exactly her kindness of heart. The queen was greatly attached to her Lord Steward, William Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, who was a great fool. This lord, who had obtained every Oxford degree and did not know how to spell, one fine morning committed the folly of dying. To die is a very imprudent thing at court, for there is then no further restraint in speaking of you. The queen, in the presence of Barkilphedro, lamented the event, finally exclaiming, with a sigh:

"It is a pity that so many virtues should have been borne, and served by so poor an intellect."

"Dieu veuille avoir son âne!" whispered Barkilphedro, in a low voice, and in French.

The queen smiled. Barkilphedro noted the smile. His conclusion was that biting pleased. Free license had been given to his spite. From that day he thrust his curiosity everywhere, and his malignity with it. He was given his way, so much was he feared. He who can make the king laugh makes the others tremble. He was a powerful buffoon. Every day he worked his way forward—underground. Barkilphedro became a necessity. Many great people honored him with their confidence, to the extent of charging him, when they required him, with their disgraceful commissions.

There are wheels within wheels at court. Barkilphedro became the motive power. Have you remarked, in certain mechanisms, the smallness of the motive wheel?

Josiana, in particular, who, as we have explained, made use of Barkilphedro's talents as a spy, reposed such confidence in him, that she had not hesitated to intrust him with one of the master-keys of her apartments, by means of which he was able to enter them at any hour. This excessive license of insight into private life was in fashion in the seventeenth century. It was called "giving the key." Josiana had given two of these confidential keys—Lord David had one, Barkilphedro the other. However, to enter straight into a bedchamber was, in the old code of manners, a thing not in the least out of the way. Thence resulted incidents. Le Ferté, suddenly drawing back the bed curtains of Mademoiselle Lafont, found,

inside, Sainson, the black musketeer, etc., etc.

Barkilphedro excelled in making the cunning discoveries, which place the great in the power of the little. His walk in the dark was winding, soft, clever. Like every perfect spy, he was composed of the inclemency of the executioner and the patience of a micograph. He was a born courtier. Every courtier is a noctambulist. The courtier prowls in the night, which is called power. He carries a dark lantern in his hand. He lights up the spot he wishes, and remains in darkness himself. What he seeks with his lantern is not a man, it is a fool. What he finds is the king.

Kings do not like to see those about them pretend to greatness. Irony aimed at any one except themselves has a charm for them. The talent of Barkilphedro consisted in a perpetual dwarfing of the peers and princes to the advantage of her majesty's stature, thus increased in proportion. The master-key held by Barkilphedro was made with two sets of wards, one at each end, so as to open the inner apartments in both Josiana's favorite residences,—Hunkerville House in London, Corleone Lodge at Windsor. These two houses were part of the Clancharlie inheritance. Hunkerville House was close to Oldgate. Oldgate was a gate of London, which was entered by the Harwich road, on which was displayed a statue of Charles II., with a painted angel on his head, and beneath his feet a carved lion and unicorn. From Hunkerville House, in an easterly wind, you heard the peals of St. Marylebone. Corleone Lodge was a Florentine palace of brick and stone, with a marble colonnade, built on pilework, at Windsor, at the head of the wooden bridge, and having one of the finest courts in England.

In the latter palace, near Windsor Castle Josiana was within the queen's reach. Nevertheless, Josiana liked it.

Scarcely anything in appearance, everything in the root; such was the influence of Barkilphedro over the queen. There is nothing more difficult than to drag up these bad grasses of the court—they take a deep root, and offer no hold above the surface. To root out a Roquelaure, a Triboulet, or a Brummel, is almost impossible.

From day to day, and more and more, did the queen take Barkilphedro into her good

graces. Sarah Jennings is famous; Barkilphedro is unknown. His existence remains ignored. The name of Barkilphedro has not reached as far as history. All the moles are not caught by the mole-trapper.

Barkilphedro, once a candidate for orders, had studied a little of everything. Skimming all things leaves naught for result. One may be victim of the *omnis res scibilis*. Having the vessel of the Danaïdes in one's head is the misfortune of a whole race of learned men, who may be termed the sterile. What Barkilphedro had put into his brain had left it empty.

The mind, like nature, abhors vacuum. Into emptiness, nature puts love; the mind often puts hate. Hate occupies.

Hate for hate's sake exists. Art for art's sake exists in nature more than is believed. A man hates—he must do something. Gratuitous hate—formidable word! It means hate which is itself its own payment. The bear lives by licking his claws. Not indefinitely, of course. The claws must be re-victualled. Something must be put under them.

Hate indistinct is sweet and suffices for a time; but one must end by having an object. An animosity diffused over creation is exhausting, like every solitary pleasure. Hate without an object is like a shooting-match without a target. What lends interest to the game is a heart to be pierced. One cannot hate solely for honor; some seasoning is necessary—a man, a woman, somebody, to destroy. This service of making the game interesting; of offering an end; of throwing passion into hate by fixing it on an object; of amusing the hunter by the sight of his living prey; of giving the watcher the hope of the smoking and boiling blood about to flow; of amusing the birdcatcher by the credulity of the uselessly-winged lark; of being a victim, unknowingly reared for murder by a master-mind; all this exquisite and horrible service, of which the person rendering it is unconscious, Josiana rendered Barkilphedro.

Thought is a projectile. Barkilphedro had, from the first day, begun to aim at Josiana the evil intentions which were in his mind. An intention and a carbine are alike. Barkilphedro aimed at Josiana, directing against the duchess all his secret malice. That astonishes you! What has the bird done at

which you fire? You want to eat it, you say. And so it was with Barkilphedro.

Josiana could not be struck in the heart—the spot where the enigma lies is hard to wound: but she could be struck in the head—that is, in her pride. It was there that she thought herself strong, and that she was weak.

Barkilphedro had found it out. If Josiana had been able to see clearly through the night of Barkilphedro, if she had been able to distinguish what lay in ambush behind his smile, that proud woman, so highly situated, would have trembled. Fortunately for the tranquillity of her sleep, she was in complete ignorance of what was in the man.

The unexpected spreads, one knows not whence. The profound depths of life are dangerous. There is no small hate. Hate is always enormous. It preserves its stature in the smallest being, and remains a monster. An elephant hated by a worm is in danger.

Even before he struck, Barkilphedro felt, with joy, the foretaste of the evil action which he was about to commit. He did not as yet know what he was going to do to Josiana; but he had made up his mind to do something. To have come to this decision was a great step taken.

To crush Josiana utterly would have been too great a triumph. He did not hope for so much; but to humiliate her, lessen her, bring her grief, redden her proud eyes with tears of rage—what a success! He counted on it. Tenacious, diligent, faithful to the torment of his neighbor, not to be torn from his purpose, nature had not formed him for nothing. He well understood how to find the flaw in Josiana's golden armor, and how to make the blood of the Olympian flow.

What benefit, we ask again, would accrue to him in so doing? An immense benefit; doing evil to one who had done good to him. What is an envious man? An ungrateful one. He hates the light which lights and warms him. Zoilus hated that benefit to man, Homer. To inflict on Josiana what would now-a-days be called vivisection—to place her, all convulsed, on his anatomical table; to dissect her alive, at his leisure, in some surgery; to cut her up, as an amateur, while she should scream; this dream delighted Barkilphedro!

To arrive at this result it was necessary to suffer somewhat himself; he did so willingly.



We may pinch ourselves with our own pin-cers. The knife as it shuts cuts our fingers. What does it matter? That he should partake of Josiana's torture was a matter of little moment. The executioner handling the red-hot iron, when about to brand a prisoner, takes no heed of a little burn. Because another suffers much, he suffers nothing. To see the victim's writhings takes all pain from the inflictor.

Do harm, whatever happens.

To plan evil for others is mingled with an acceptance of some hazy responsibility. We risk ourselves in the danger which we impel towards another, because the chain of events sometimes, of course, brings unexpected accidents. This does not stop the man who is truly malicious. He feels as much joy as the patient suffers agony. He is tickled by the laceration of the victim. The malicious man blooms in hideous joy. Pain reflects itself on him in a sense of welfare. The Duke of Alva used to warm his hands at the stake. The pile was torture, the reflection of it pleasure. That such transpositions should be possible makes one shudder. Our dark side is unfathomable. *Supplice exquis* (exquisite torture)—the expression is in Bodin\*—has perhaps this terrible triple sense: search for the torture; suffering of the tortured; delight of the torturer.

Ambition, appetite; all such words signify some one sacrificed to some one satiated. It is sad that hope should be wicked. Is it that the outpourings of our wishes flow naturally to the direction to which we most incline, that of evil? One of the hardest labors of the just man is to expunge from his soul a malevolence which it is difficult to efface. Almost all our desires, when examined, contain what we dare not avow.

In the completely wicked man this exists in hideous perfection. So much the worse for others signifies so much the better for himself. The shadows of the caverns of man's mind!

Josiana, in a plentitude of security, the fruit of ignorant pride, had a contempt for all danger. The feminine faculty of disdain is extraordinary. Josiana's disdain was unreasoning, involuntary and confident. Barkilphedro was to her so contemptible, that she would have been astonished had any one re-

marked to her that such a creature existed. She went, and came, and laughed before this man who was looking at her with evil eyes. Thoughtful, he bided his time.

In proportion as he waited, his determination to cast a despair into this woman's life augmented. Inexorable high tide of malice.

In the meantime he gave himself excellent reasons for his determination. It must be thought that scoundrels are deficient in self-esteem. They enter into details with themselves in their lofty monologues, and they take matters with a high hand. How? This Josiana had bestowed charity on him! She had thrown some crumbs of her enormous wealth to him, as to a beggar. She had nailed and riveted him to an office which was unworthy him. Yes; that he, Barkilphedro, almost a clergyman, of varied and profound talent, a learned man, with the material in him for a bishop, should have for employ the registration of nasty patience-trying shards, that he should have to pass his life in the garret of a register office, gravely uncorking stupid bottles, incrustated with all the nastiness of the sea, deciphering musty parchments, like filthy conjuring-books, dirty wills, and other illegible stuff of the kind, was the fault of this Josiana. Worst of all, this creature "thee'd" and "thou'd" him! And he should not revenge himself?—he should not punish such conduct? Well, in that case there would no longer be justice on earth!

## CHAPTER X.

### THE FLAME WHICH WOULD BE SEEN IF MAN WERE TRANSPARENT.

WHAT! this woman, this extravagant thing, this libidinous dreamer, a virgin until the opportunity occurred, this bit of flesh as yet unfreed, this bold creature under a princess's coronet: this Diana by pride, as yet untaken by the first comer, just because chance had so willed it; this bastard of a low-lived king who had not the intellect to keep his place; this duchess by a lucky hit, who, being a fine lady, played the goddess, and who, had she been poor, would have been a prostitute; this lady, more or less, this robber of a prescribed man's goods, this overbearing strumpet, because one day he, Barkilphedro, had not money enough to buy his dinner, and to get a lodging, she had had the

\* Book I., p. 196.

impudence to seat him in her house at the corner of a table, and to put him up in some hole in her intolerable palace; where? never mind where; perhaps in the barn, perhaps in the cellar, what does it matter? a little better than her valets, a little worse than her horses. She had abused his distress; his, Barkilphedro's; in hastening to do him treacherous good, a thing which the rich do in order to humiliate the poor, and to tie them, like curs led by a string. Besides, what did the service she rendered him cost her? A service is worth what it costs. She had spare rooms in her house. She came to Barkilphedro's aid! A great thing, indeed; had she eaten a spoonful the less of turtle soup for it? had she deprived herself of anything in the hateful overflowing of her superfluous luxuries? No. She had added to it a vanity, a luxury, a good action like a ring on her finger, the relief of a man of wit, the patronization of a clergyman. She could give herself airs; say, I lavish kindness; I fill the mouths of men of letters; I am his benefactress. How lucky the wretch was to find me out! What a patroness of the arts I am! All for having set up a truckle bed in a wretched garret in the roof. As for the place in the Admiralty, Barkilphedro owed it to Josiana; by Jove, a pretty appointment! Josiana had made Barkilphedro what he was. She had created him. Be it so. Yes, created nothing. Less than nothing. For in his absurd situation he felt borne down, tongue-tied, disfigured. What did he owe Josiana? The thanks due from a hunchback to the mother who bore him deformed. Behold your privileged ones, your folks overwhelmed with fortune, your parvenus, your favorites of that horrid stepmother, Fortune! And that man of talent, Barkilphedro was obliged to stand on staircases, to bow to footmen, to climb to the top of the house at night, to be courteous, assiduous, pleasant, respectful, and to have ever on his muscle a respectful grimace! Was not it enough to make him gnash his teeth with rage! And all the while she was putting pearls around her neck, and making amorous poses to her fool, Lord David Dirry-Moir; the hussy!

Never let any one do you a service. They will abuse the advantage it gives them. Never allow yourself to be taken in the act of inattention. They would relieve you. Because he was starving, this woman had found it a

sufficient pretext to give him bread. From that moment he was her servant; a craving of the stomach, and there is a chain for life! To be obliged is to be sold. The happy, the powerful, make use of the moment you stretch out your hand to place a penny in it, and at the crisis of your weakness make you a slave, and a slave of the worst kind, the slave of an act of charity. A slave forced to love the enslaver. What infamy! what want of delicacy, what an assault on your self-respect! Then all is over. You are sentenced for life to consider this man good, that woman beautiful; to remain in the back rows; to approve, to applaud, to admire, to worship, to prostrate yourself, to blister your knees by long genuflections, to sugar your words when you are gnawing your lips with anger, when you are biting down your cries of fury, and when you have within you more savage turbulence and more bitter foam than the ocean!

It is thus that the rich make prisoners of the poor.

This slime of a good action performed towards you bedaubes and bespatters you with mud for ever.

An alms is irremediable. Gratitude is paralysis. A benefit is a sticky and repugnant adherence which deprives you of free movement. Those odious, opulent, and spoiled creatures whose pity has thus injured you are well aware of this. It is done—you are their creature. They have bought you—and how? By a bone taken from their dog and cast to you. They have flung that bone at your head. You have been stoned as much as benefited. It is all one. Have you knawed the bone—yes or no? You have had your place in the dog-kennel as well. Then be thankful. Be ever thankful. Adore your masters. Kneel on indefinitely. A benefit implies an understood inferiority accepted by you. It means that you feel them to be gods and yourself a poor devil. Your diminution augments them. Your bent form makes theirs more upright. In the tones of their voices there is an impertinent inflexion. Their family matters, their marriages, their baptisms, their child-bearings, their progeny, all concern you. A wolf cub is born to them. Well! you have to compose a sonnet. You are a poet because you are low. Isn't it enough to make the stars fall! A little more, and they would make you wear their old shoes.

"Who have you got there, my dear ? How ugly he is !—Who is that man ?"

"I do not know. A sort of scholar, whom I feed."

Thus converse these idiots, without even lowering their voice. You hear, and remain mechanically amiable. If you are ill, your masters will send for the doctor—not their own. Occasionally they may even inquire after you. Being of a different species from you, and an inaccessible height above you, they are affable. Their height makes them easy. They know that equality is impossible. By force of disdain they are polite. At table they give you a little nod. Sometimes they absolutely know how your name is spelt ! They only show that they are your protectors by walking unconsciously over all the delicacy and susceptibility you possess. They treat you with good-nature. Is all this to be borne ?

No doubt he was eager to punish Josiana. He must teach her with whom she had to deal !

Oh ! my rich gentry, because you can not eat up everything, because opulence produces indigestion seeing that your stomachs are no bigger than ours, because it is, after all, better to distribute the remainder than to throw it away, you exalt a morsel flung to the poor into an act of magnificence. Oh ! you give us bread, you give us shelter, you give us clothes, you give us employment, and you push audacity, folly, cruelty, stupidity, and absurdity, to the pitch of believing that we are grateful. The bread is the bread of servitude, the shelter is a footman's bedroom, the clothes are a livery, the employment is ridiculous, paid for, it is true, but brutalising.

Oh ! you believe in the right to humiliate us with lodging and nourishment, and you imagine that we are your debtor, and you count on our gratitude ? Very well ! we will eat up your substance, we will devour you alive and gnaw your heartstrings with our teeth.

This Josiana ! was it not absurd ? what merit had she ? She had accomplished the wonderful work of coming into the world as a testimony the folly of her father, and the shame of her mother. She had done us the favor to exist, and for her kindness in becoming a public scandal, they paid her millions ; she had estates and castles, warrens, parks, lakes, forests and I know not what besides, and with all that

she was making a fool of herself, and verses were addressed to her ! And Barkilphedro, who had studied and labored and taken pains, and stuffed his eyes and his brain with great books, who had grown moldy in old works and in science, who was full of wit, who could command armies, who could, if he would, write tragedies like Otway and Dryden, who was made to be an emperor, Barkilphedro had been reduced to permit this nobody to prevent him from dying of hunger. Could the usurpation of the rich, the hateful elect of chance, go farther ? They put on the semblance of being generous to us, of protecting us, and of smiling on us, and we would drink their blood and lick our lips after it ! That this low woman of the court should have the odious power of being a benefactress, and that a man so superior should be condemned to pick up such bribes, falling from such a hand, what a frightful iniquity ! and what social system is this which has for its base disproportion and injustice ? Would it not be best to take it by the four corners, and to throw pell-mell to the ceiling the damask table-cloth, and the festival and the orgies, and the tiplings and drunkenness, and the guests, and those with their elbows on the table, and those with their paws under it, and the insolent who give and the idiots who accept, and to spit it all back again in the face of Providence, and fling all the earth to the heavens. In the meantime let us stick our claws into Josiana.

Thus dreamed Barkilphedro. Such were the ragings of his soul. It is the habit of the envious man to absolve himself, amalgamating with his personal grievance the public wrongs.

All the wild forms of hateful passions went and came in the intellect of this ferocious being. At the corners of old maps of the world of the fifteenth century, are great vague spaces without shape or name, on which are written these three words, *hic sunt leones*. Such a dark corner is there also in man. Passions grow and growl somewhere within us, and we may say of an obscure portion of our souls, there are lions here.

Is this scaffolding of wild reasoning absolutely absurd ? does it lack a certain justice ? We must confess it does not.

It is fearful to think that judgment within us is not justice. Judgment is the relative, justice is the absolute. Think of the

difference between a judge and a just man.

Wicked men lead conscience astray with authority. There are gymnastics of untruth. A sophist is a forger, and this forger sometimes brutalizes good sense.

A certain logic, very supple, very implacable, and very agile, is at the service of evil, and excels in stabbing truth in the dark. These are blows struck by the devil at Providence.

The worst of it was that Barkilphedro had a presentiment. He was undertaking a heavy task, and he was afraid that after all the evil achieved might not be proportionate to the work.

To be corrosive as he was, to have within himself a will of steel, a hate of diamond, a burning curiosity for the catastrophe, and to burn nothing, to decapitate nothing, to exterminate nothing; to be what he was, a force of devastation, a voracious animosity, a devourer of the happiness of others, to have been created (for there is a creator, whether God or devil), to have been created Barkilphedro all over, and to inflict perhaps after all but a filip of the finger—could this be possible? could it be that Barkilphedro should miss his aim! To be a lever powerful enough to heave great masses of rock, and when sprung to the utmost power, to succeed only in giving an affected woman a bump in the forehead! to be a catapult dealing ruin on a pole-kitten! To accomplish the task of Sisyphus, to crush an ant; to sweat all over with hate, and for nothing at all. Would not this be humiliating, when he felt himself a mechanism of hostility capable of reducing the world to powder! To put into movement all the wheels within wheels to work in the darkness all the mechanism of a Marly machine, and to succeed perhaps in pinching the end of a little rosy finger! He was to turn over and over blocks of marble, perchance with the result of ruffling a little the smooth surface of the court! Providence has a way of thus expending forces grandly. The movement of a mountain often only displaces a molehill.

Besides this, when the court is the dangerous arena, nothing is more dangerous than to aim at your enemy and miss him. In the first place, it unmasks you and irritates him; but besides and above all, it displeases the master. Kings do not like the unskilful. Let us have no contusions, no ugly gashes.

Kill anybody, but give no one a bloody nose. He who kills is clever, he who wounds awkward. Kings do not like to see their servants lamed. They are displeased if you chip a porcelain jar on their chimney-piece, or a courtier in their cortège. The court must be kept neat. Break and replace; that does not matter. Besides, all this agrees perfectly with the taste of princes for scandal. Speak evil, do none; or if you do, let it be in grand style.

Stab, do not scratch, unless the pin be poisoned. This would be an extenuating circumstance, and was, we remember, the case with Barkilphedro.

Every malicious pigmy is a phial in which is enclosed the dragon of Solomon. The phial is microscopic, the dragon immense. A formidable condensation, awaiting the gigantic hour of dilation! Ennui consoled by the premeditation of explosion! The prisoner is larger than the prison. A latent giant! how wonderful! A minnow in which is contained a hydra. To be this fearful magical box, to contain within him a Leviathan, is to the dwarf both a torture and a delight.

Nor would anything have caused Barkilphedro to let go his hold. He awaited his time. Was it to come? What mattered that? He watched for it. Self-love is mixed up in the malice of the very wicked man. To make holes and gaps in a court fortune higher than your own, to undermine it at all risks and perils, while encased and concealed yourself, is, we repeat, exceedingly interesting. The player at such a game becomes eager, even to passion. He throws himself into the work as if he were composing an epic. To be very mean, and to attack that which is great, is in itself a brilliant action. It is a fine thing to be a flea on a lion.

The noble beast feels the bite, and expends his mighty anger against the atom. An encounter with a tiger would weary him less; see how the actors exchange their parts. The lion, humiliated, feels the sting of the insect, and the flea can say, "I have in my veins the blood of a lion."

However, these reflections but half appeased the cravings of Barkilphedro's pride. Consolations, palliations at most. To vex is one thing; to torment would be infinitely better. Barkilphedro had a thought which returned to him without ceasing; his success might not go beyond just irritating the

epidermis of Josiana. What could he hope for more ; he so obscure, against her so radiant ! A scratch is worth but little to him who longs to see the crimson blood of his flayed victim, and to hear her cries as she lies before him more than naked, without even that garment, the skin ! With such a craving, how sad to be powerless !

Alas, there is nothing perfect !

However, he resigned himself. Not being able to do better, he only dreamed half his dream. To play a treacherous trick is an object after all.

What a man is he who revenges himself for a benefit received ! Barkilphedro was a giant among such men. Usually, ingratitude is forgetfulness. With this man, patented in wickedness, it was fury. The vulgar ingrate is full of ashes : what was within Barkilphedro ? A furnace. A furnace walled around by hate, silence, and rancor, awaiting Josiana for fuel. Never had a man abhorred a woman to such a point without reason. How terrible ! She was his dream, his preoccupation, his ennui, his rage.

Perhaps he was a little in love with her.

## CHAPTER XI.

### BARKILPHEDRO IN AMBUSCADE.

To find the vulnerable spot in Josiana, and to strike her there, was for all the causes we have just mentioned, the imperturbable determination of Barkilphedro. The wish is insufficient ; the power is required. How was he to set about it ? There was the question.

Vulgar vagabonds set the scenes of any wickedness they intend to commit with care. They do not feel themselves strong enough to seize the opportunity as it passes, to take possession of it by fair means or foul, and to constrain it to serve them. Deep scoundrels disdain preliminary combinations. They start for their villainies alone, merely arming themselves all round, prepared to avail themselves of various chances which may occur, and then, like Barkilphedro, await the opportunity. They know that a ready-made scheme runs the risk of fitting ill into the event which may present itself. It is not thus that a man makes himself master of possibilities, and guides them as one pleases. You

can come to no previous arrangement with destiny. To-morrow will not obey you. There is a certain want of discipline in chance.

Therefore they watch for it, and summon it suddenly, authoritatively, on the spot. No plan, no sketch, no rough model ; no ready-made shoe ill-fitting the unexpected. They plunge headlong into the dark. To turn to immediate and rapid profit any circumstance that can aid him is the quality which distinguishes the able scoundrel, and elevates the villain into the demon. To strike suddenly at fortune, *that* is true genius.

The true scoundrel strikes you from a sling with the first stone he can pick up. Clever malefactors count on the unexpected, that senseless accomplice of so many crimes. They grasp the incident and leap on it ; there is no better *Ars poetica* for this species of talent. Meanwhile be sure with whom you have to deal. Survey the ground.

With Barkilphedro the ground was Queen Anne. Barkilphedro approached the queen, and so close, that sometimes he fancied he heard the monologues of her majesty. Sometimes he was present unheeded at conversations between the sisters. Neither did they forbid his sliding in a word. He profited by this to lessen himself,—a way of inspiring confidence. Thus, one day in the garden at Hampton Court, being behind the duchess, who was behind the queen, he heard Anne, following the fashion, awkwardly enunciating sentiments.

"Animals are happy," said the queen, "They run no risk of going to hell."

"They are there already," replied Josiana.

This answer, which bluntly substituted philosophy for religion, displeased the queen. If, perchance, there was depth in the observation, Anne felt shocked.

"My dear," said she to Josiana, "we talk of hell like a couple of fools. Ask Barkilphedro all about it. He ought to know such things."

"As a devil !" said Josiana.

"As a beast," replied Barkilphedro with a bow.

"Madam," said the queen to Josiana, "he is cleverer than we."

For a man like Barkilphedro to approach the queen, was to obtain a hold on her. He could say, I hold her. Now, he wanted a means of taking advantage of his power for

his own benefit. He had his foothold in the court. To be settled there was a fine thing. No chance could now escape him. More than once he had made the queen smile maliciously. This was having a license to shoot. But was there any preserved game? Did this license to shoot permit him to break the wing or the leg of one like the sister of her majesty? The first point to make clear was, did the queen love her sister? One false step would lose all. Barkilphedro watched.

Before he plays, the player looks at the cards. What trumps has he? Barkilphedro began by examining the age of the two women. Josiana, twenty-three; Anne, forty-one. So far, so good. He held trumps. The moment that a woman ceases to count by springs, and begins to count by winters, she becomes cross. A dull rancor possesses her against the time of which she carries the proofs. Fresh-blown beauties, perfumes for others, are to such a one but thorns. Of the roses she feels but the prick. It seems as if all the freshness is stolen from her, and that beauty decreases in her because it increases in others.

To profit by this secret ill-humor, to dive into the wrinkle on the face of this woman of forty, who was a queen, seemed a good game for Barkilphedro.

Envy excels in exciting jealousy, as the rat draws the crocodile from its hole.

Barkilphedro fixed his wise gaze on Anne. He saw into the queen, as one sees into a stagnant pool. The marsh has its transparency. In dirty waters we see vices, in muddy water we see stupidity; Anne was muddy water.

Embryos of sentiments and larvæ of ideas moved in her thick brain. They were not distinct; they had scarcely any outline. But they were realities, however shapeless. The queen thought this; the queen desired that. To decide what, was the difficulty. The confused transformations which work in stagnant water are difficult to study. The queen, habitually obscure, sometimes made sudden and stupid revelations. It was on these that it was necessary to seize. He must take advantage of them on the moment. How did the queen feel towards the Duchess Josiana? Did she wish her good or evil?

Here was the problem. Barkilphedro set himself to solve it. This problem solved, he might go further.

Divers chances served Barkilphedro; his tenacity at the watch above all.

Anne was, on her husband's side, slightly related to the new Queen of Prussia, wife of the king with the hundred chamberlains. She had her portrait painted on enamel, after the process of Turquet of Mayerne. This Queen of Prussia had also a younger illegitimate sister, the Baroness Drika.

One day, in the presence of Barkilphedro, Anne asked the Russian ambassador some questions about this Drika.

"They say she is rich?"

"Very rich."

"She has palaces?"

"More magnificent than those of her sister, the queen."

"Whom will she marry?"

"A great lord, the Count Gormo."

"Pretty?"

"Charming."

"Is she young?"

"Very young."

"As beautiful as the queen?"

The ambassador lowered his voice, and replied,—

"More beautiful."

"That is insolent," murmured Barkilphedro.

The queen was silent, then she exclaimed,—

"Those bastards!"

Barkilphedro noticed the plural.

Another time, when the queen was leaving the chapel, Barkilphedro kept pretty close to her majesty, behind the two grooms of the almonry. Lord David Dirry-Moir, crossing the ranks of women, made a sensation by his handsome appearance. As he passed there was an explosion of feminine exclamations.

"How elegant! How gallant! What a noble air! How handsome!"

"How disagreeable!" grumbled the queen.

Barkilphedro overheard this; it decided him.

He could hurt the duchess without displeasing the queen. The first problem was solved; but now the second presented itself.

What could he do to harm the duchess? What means did his wretched appointment offer to attain so difficult an object?

Evidently none.

## CHAPTER XII.

## SCOTLAND, IRELAND, AND ENGLAND.

LET us note a circumstance. Josiana had *le tour*.

This is easy to understand when we reflect that she was, although illegitimate, the queen's sister—that is to say, a princely personage.

To have *le tour*: what does it mean?

Viscount St. John, otherwise Bolingbroke, wrote as follows to Thomas Lennard, Earl of Sussex:—

“Two things mark the great—in England, they have *le tour*; in France, *le pour*.”

When the king of France travelled, the courier of the court stopped at the halting place in the evening, and assigned lodgings to his majesty's suite.

Amongst the gentlemen some had an immense privilege. “They have *le pour*,” says the *Journal Historique* for the year 1694, page 6; “which means that the courier who marks the billets puts ‘*Pour*’ before their names—as ‘*Pour M. le Prince de Soubise*,’ instead of which, when he marks the lodging of one who is not royal, he does not put *pour*, but simply the name—as ‘*Le Duc de Gesvres, le Duc de Mazarin*.’” This *pour* on a door indicated a prince or a favorite. A favorite is worse than a prince. The king granted *le pour*, like a blue ribbon or a peerage.

*Avoir le tour* in England was less glorious, but more real. It was a sign of intimate communication with the sovereign. Whoever might be, by birth or favor, in a position to receive direct communications from majesty, had in the wall of their bedchamber a shaft, in which was adjusted a bell. The bell sounded, the shaft opened, a royal missive appeared on a gold plate or on a cushion of velvet, and the shaft closed. This was intimate and solemn, the mysterious in the familiar. The shaft was used for no other purpose. The sound of the bell announced a royal message. No one saw who brought it. It was of course merely the page of the king or the queen. Leicester *avait le tour* under Elizabeth; Buckingham under James I. Josiana had it under Anne, though not much in favor. Never was a privilege more envied.

This privilege entailed additional servility. The recipient was more of a servant. At Court that which elevates, degrades. *Avoir le tour* was said in French; this circumstance

of English etiquette having, probably, been borrowed from some old French folly.

Lady Josiana, a virgin peeress as Elizabeth had been a virgin queen, led—sometimes in the City, and sometimes in the country, according to the season—an almost princely life, and kept nearly a court, at which Lord David was courtier, with many others.

Not being married, Lord David and Lady Josiana could show themselves together in public without exciting ridicule, and they did so frequently. They often went to plays and race-courses in the same carriage, and sat together in the same box. They were chilled by the impending marriage, which was not only permitted to them, but imposed upon them; but they felt an attraction for each other's society. The privacy permitted to the engaged has a frontier easily passed. From this they abstained; that which is easy is in bad taste.

The best pugilistic encounters then took place at Lambeth, a parish in which the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury has a palace though the air there is unhealthy, and a rich Library open at certain hours to decent people.

One evening in winter there was in a meadow there, the gates of which were locked, a fight, at which Josiana, escorted by Lord David, was present. She had asked,—

“Are women admitted?”

And David had responded,—

“*Sunt fœminæ magnates!*”

Liberal translation, “Not shopkeepers.” Literal translation, “Great ladies exist. A duchess goes everywhere!”

This is why Lady Josiana saw a boxing match.

Lady Josiana made only this concession to propriety—she dressed as a man, a very common custom at that period. Women seldom travelled otherwise. Out of every six persons who travelled by the coach from Windsor, it was rare that there were not one or two amongst them who were women in male attire; a certain sign of high birth.

Lord David, being in company with a woman, could not take any part in the match himself, and merely assisted as one of the audience.

Lady Josiana betrayed her quality in one way; she had an opera-glass, then used by gentlemen only.

This encounter in the noble science was presided over by Lord Germaine, great-grandfather, or granduncle, of that Lord Germaine who, towards the end of the eighteenth century, was colonel, ran away in a battle, was afterwards made Minister of War, and only escaped from the bolts of the enemy, to fall by a worse fate, shot through and through by the sarcasm of Sheridan.

Many gentlemen were betting. Harry Bellew, of Carleton, who had claims to the extinct peerage of Bella-Aqua, with Henry, Lord Hyde, member of Parliament for the borough of Dunhivid, which is also called Launceston; the Honourable Peregrine Bertie, member for the borough of Truro, with Sir Thomas Colpepper, member for Maidstone; the Laird of Lamyrbau, which is on the borders of Lothian, with Samuel Trefusis, of the borough of Penryn, Sir Bartholomew Gracedieu, of the borough of St. Ives, with the Honorable Charles Bodville, who was called Lord Robartes, and who was *Custos Rotulorum* of the county of Cornwall; besides many others.

Of the two combatants, one was an Irishman, named after his native mountain in Tipperary, Phelem-ghe-Madone, and the other a Scot, named Helmsgale.

They represented the national pride of each country. Ireland and Scotland were about to set to; Erin was going to fisticuff Gajothel. So that the bets amounted to over forty thousand guineas, besides the stakes.

The two champions were naked, excepting short breeches buckled over the hips, and spiked boots laced as high as the ankles.

Helmsgail, the Scot, was a youth scarcely nineteen, but he had already had his forehead sewn up, for which reason they laid 2½ to 1 on him. The month before he had broken the ribs and gouged out the eyes of a pugilist, named Sixmileswater. This explained the enthusiasm he created. He had won his backers twelve thousand pounds. Besides having his forehead sewn up Helmsgail's jaw had been broken. He was neatly made and active. He was about the height of a small woman, upright, thick set, and of a stature low and threatening. And nothing had been lost of the advantages given him by nature; not a muscle which was not trained to its object, pugilism. His firm chest was compact, and brown and shining like brass.

He smiled, and three teeth which he had lost added to this smile.

His adversary was tall and overgrown—that is to say, weak.

He was a man of forty years of age, six feet high, with the chest of a hippopotamus, and a mild expression of face. The blow of his fist would break in the deck of a vessel, but he did not know how to use it.

The Irishman, Phelem-ghe-Madone, was all surface, and seemed to have entered the ring to receive, rather than to give, blows. Only it was felt that he would take a deal of punishment. Like underdone beef, tough to chew, and impossible to swallow. He was what was termed, in local slang, raw meat. He squinted. He seemed resigned.

The two men had passed the preceding night in the same bed, and had slept together. They had each drunk port wine from the same glass, to the three-inch mark.

Each had his group of seconds—men of savage expression, threatening the umpires when it suited their side. Amongst Helmsgail's supporters, were to be seen John Gromane, celebrated for having carried an ox on his back; and one called John Bray, who had once carried on his back ten bushels of flour, at fifteen pecks to the bushel, besides the miller himself, and had walked over two hundred paces under the weight. On the side of Phelem-ghe-Madone, Lord Hyde had brought from Launceston a certain Kilter, who lived at Greencastle, and could throw a stone weighing twenty pounds to a greater height than the highest tower of the castle.

These three men, Kilter, Bray, and Gromane, were Cornishmen by birth, and did honor to their county.

The other seconds were brutal fellows, with broad backs, bowed legs, knotted fists, dull faces; ragged, fearing nothing, nearly all jail-birds.

Many of them understood admirably how to make the police drunk. Each profession should have its peculiar talents.

The field chosen was, further off than the bear garden, where they formerly baited bears, bulls and dogs; it was beyond the line of the furthest houses, by the side of the ruins of the Priory of Saint Mary Overy, dismantled by Henry VIII. The wind was northerly, and biting; a small rain fell, which was instantly frozen into ice. Some gentlemen present were evidently fathers of fami-



s, recognised as such by their putting up eir umbrellas.

On the side of Phelem-ghe-Madone was lonel Moncreif, as umpire; and Kilter, as ond, to support him on his knee.

On the side of Helmsgail, the Honourable ighé Beaumaris was umpire, with Lord sertum, from Kilcarry, as bottle-holder, to pport him on his knee.

The two combatants stood for a few seconds motionless in the ring, whilst the tches were being compared. They then proached each other and shook hands.

Phelem-ghe-Madone said to Helmsgail,—

“I should prefer going home.”

Helmsgail answered, handsomely,—

‘The gentlemen must not be disappointed, any account.’

Naked as they were, they felt the cold. elem-ghe-Madone shook. His teeth chated.

Doctor Eleanor Sharpe, nephew of the chbishop of York, cried out to them,—

‘Set to boys; it will warm you.’

Those friendly words thawed them.

They set to.

But neither one nor the other, was angry. ere were three ineffectual rounds. The

v. Doctor Gumdraith, one of the forty llows of All Souls’ College, cried,—

‘Spirit them up with gin.’

But the two umpires and the two seconds ured to the rule. Yet it was exceedingly cold.

First blood was claimed,

They were again set face to face.

They looked at each other, approached, etched their arms, touched each others s, and then drew back.

All at once, Helmsgail, the little man, ang forward. The real fight had begun.

Phelem-ghe-Madone was struck in the face, ween the eyes. His whole face streamed h blood. The crowd cried,—

‘Helmsgail has tapped his claret!’

There was applause. Phelem-ghe-Madone, ning his arms like the sails of a windmill, uck out at random.

The Honorable Peregrine Bertie said 3linded,” but he was not blind yet.

Then Helmagail heard on all sides these ouraging words—“Bung up his peepers!”

On the whole the two champions were lly well-matched; and, notwithstanding

the unfavorable weather, it was seen that the fight would be a success.

The great giant, Phelem-ghe-Madone, had to bear the inconveniences of his advantages; he moved heavily. His arms were massive as clubs; but his chest was a mass. His little opponent ran, struck, sprung, gnashed his teeth; re-doubling vigor by quickness, from knowledge of the science.

On the one side was the primitive blow of the fist—savage, uncultivated, in a state of ignorance; on the other side, the civilized blow of the fist. Helmsgail fought as much with his nerves as with his muscles, and with as much intention as force. Phelem-ghe-Madone was a kind of sluggish mauler,—somewhat mauled himself, to begin with. It was art against nature. It was cultivated ferocity against barbarism.

It was clear that the barbarian would be beaten, but not very quickly. Hence the interest.

A little man against a big one, and the chances are in favor of the little one. The cat has the best of it with a dog. Goliaths are always vanquished by Davids.

A hail of exclamations followed the combatants.

“Bravo, Helmsgail! Good! Well done, Highlander! Now, Phelem!”

And the friends of Helmsgail repeated their benevolent exhortation.—

“Bung up his peepers!”

Helmsgail did better. Rapidly bending down and back again, with the undulation of a serpent, he struck Phelem-ghe-Madone in the sternum. The Colossus staggered.

“Foul blow!” cried Viscount Barnard.

Phelem-ghe-Madone sank down on the knee of his second, saying,—

“I am beginning to get warm.”

Lord Desertum consulted the umpires, and said,—

“Five minutes before time is called.”

Phelem-ghe-Madone was becoming weaker. Kilter wiped the blood from his face and the sweat from his body with a flannel, and placed the neck of a bottle to his mouth. They had come to the eleventh round. Phelem, besides the scar on his forehead, had his breast disfigured with blows, his belly swollen, and the fore part of the head sacrificed. Helmsgail was untouched.

A kind of tumult arose amongst the gentlemen.

Lord Barnard repeated, "Foul blow!"

"Bets void!" said the Laird of Lamyr-bau.

"I claim my stake!" replied Sir Thomas Colpepper.

And the honorable member for the borough of Saint Ives, Sir Bartholomew Gracedieu, added, "Give me back my five hundred guineas, and I will go. Stop the fight."

Phelem arose, staggering like a drunken man, and said,—

"Let us go on fighting on one condition—that I also shall have the right to give one foul blow."

"They cried 'Agreed!' from all parts of the ring. Helmsgail shrugged his shoulders. Five minutes elapsed, and they set to again.

The fighting, which was agony to Phelem, was play to Helmsgail. Such are the triumphs of science.

The little man found means of putting the big one into chancery—that is to say, Helmsgail suddenly took under his left arm, which was bent like a steel crescent, the huge head of Phelem-ghe-Madone, and held it there under his armpit, the neck bent and twisted, whilst Helmsgail's right fist fell again and again like a hammer on a nail, only from below and striking upwards, thus smashing his opponent's face at his ease. When Phelem, released at length, lifted his head, he had no longer a face.

That which, had been a nose, eyes, and a mouth, now looked only like a black sponge soaked in blood. He spat, and on the ground lay four of his teeth.

Then he fell. Kilter received him on his knee.

Helmsgail was hardly touched: he had some insignificant bruises, and a scratch on his collar bone.

No one was cold now. They laid sixteen and a quarter to one on Helmsgail.

Harry Carleton cried out:

"It is all over with Phelem-ghe-Madone. I will lay my peerage of Bella-aqua, and my title of Lord Bellew, against the Archbishop of Canterbury's old wig, on Helmsgail."

"Give me your muzzle," said Kilter, to Phelem-ghe-Madone. And stuffing the bloody flannel into the bottle, he washed him all over with gin. The mouth reappeared, and he opened one eye-lid. His temples seemed fractured.

"One round more, my friend," said Kilter; and he added, "for the honor of the old town."

The Welsh and the Irish understand each other, still Phelem made no sign of having any power of understanding left.

Phelem arose, supported by Kilter. It was the twenty-fifth round. From the way in which this Cyclops, for he had but one eye, placed himself in position, it was evident that this was the last round, for no one doubted his defeat. He placed his guard below his chin, with the awkwardness of a failing man.

Helmsgail, with a skin hardly sweating, cried out,—

"I'll back myself, a thousand to one."

Helmsgail, raising his arm, struck out; and, what was strange, both fell. A ghastly chuckle was heard. It was Phelem-ghe-Madone's expression of delight. While receiving the terrible blow given him by Helmsgail on the skull, he had given him a foul blow on the navel.

Helmsgail, lying on his back, rattled in his throat.

The spectators looked at him as he lay on the ground, and said, "Paid back!" All clapped their hands, even those who had lost. Phelem-ghe-Madone had given foul blow for foul blow, and had only asserted his right.

They carried Helmsgail off on a handbarrow. The opinion was that he would not recover.

Lord Robartes exclaimed, "I win twelve hundred guineas."

Phelem-ghe-Madone was evidently maimed for life.

As she left, Josiana took the arm of Lord David, an act which was tolerated amongst people "engaged." She said to him,—

"It was very fine, but——"

"But what?"

"I thought it would have driven away my spleen. It has not."

Lord David stopped, looked at Josiana, shut his mouth, and inflated his cheeks, whilst he nodded his head, which signified attention, and said to the duchess,—

"For spleen there is but one remedy."

"What is it?"

"Gwynplaine."

The duchess asked,—

"And who is Gwynplaine?"

## BOOK THE SECOND.

## GWYNPLAINE AND DEA.

## CHAPTER I.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FACE OF HIM WHOM  
WE HAVE HITHERTO SEEN ONLY  
THE ACTS.

NATURE had been prodigal of her kindness to Gwynplaine. She had bestowed on him a mouth opening to his ears, ears folding over to his eyes, a shapeless nose to support the spectacles of the grimace maker, and a face that no one could have looked upon without laughing.

We have just said that nature had loaded Gwynplaine with her gifts. But was it nature? Had she not been assisted?

Two slits for eyes, a hiatus for a mouth, a snub protuberance with two holes for nostrils, a flattened face, all having for the result an appearance of laughter; it is certain that nature never produces such perfection single-handed.

But is laughter a synonym of joy?

If, in the presence of this mountebank—for he was one—the first impression of gayety wore off, and the man were observed with attention, traces of art were to be recognized. Such a face could never have been created by chance, it must have resulted from intention. Such perfect completeness is not in nature. Man can do nothing to create beauty, but everything to produce ugliness. A Hottentot profile cannot be changed into a Roman outline, but out of a Grecian nose you can make a Calmuck's. It only requires to obliterate the root of the nose, and to flatten the nostrils. The dog latin of the middle ages had a reason for its creation of the verb *denasare*. Had Gwynplaine when a child been so worthy of attention that his face had been subjected to transmutation? Why not? Needed there a greater motive than the speculation of his future exhibition? According to all appearance, industrious manipulators of children had worked upon his face. It seemed evident that a mysterious and probably occult science, which was to surgery what alchemy was to chemistry, had chiselled his flesh, evidently at a very tender age, and manufactured his countenance with premeditation. That

science, clever with the knife, skilled in obfuscations and ligatures, had enlarged the mouth, cut away the lips, laid bare the gums, distended the ears, cut the cartilages, displaced the eyelids and the cheeks, enlarged the zygomatic muscle, pressed the scars and cicatrices to a level, turned back the skin over the lesions whilst the face was thus stretched, from all which resulted that powerful and profound piece of sculpture, the mask, Gwynplaine.

Man is not born thus.

However it may have been, the manipulation of Gwynplaine had succeeded admirably. Gwynplaine was a gift of Providence to dispel the sadness of man.

Of what providence? Is there a providence of demons as well as of God? We put the question without answering it.

Gwynplaine was a mountebank. He showed himself on the platform. No such effect had ever before been produced. Hypochondriacs were cured by the sight of him alone. He was avoided by folks in mourning, because they were compelled to laugh when they saw him, without regard to their decent gravity. One day the executioner came, and Gwynplaine made him laugh. Everyone who saw Gwynplaine held his sides; he spoke, and they rolled on the ground. He was removed from sadness as is pole from pole. Spleen at the one; Gwynplaine at the other.

Thus he rose rapidly in the fair ground and at the cross roads to the very satisfactory renown of a horrible man.

It was Gwynplaine's laugh which created the laughter of others, yet he did not laugh himself. His face laughed; his thoughts did not. The extraordinary face which chance or a special and weird industry had fashioned for him, laughed alone. Gwynplaine had nothing to do with it. The outside did not depend on the interior. The laugh which he had not placed, himself, on his brow, on his eyelids, on his mouth, he could not remove. It had been stamped forever on his face. It was automatic, and the more irresistible because it seemed petrified. No one could escape from this rictus. Two convulsions of the face are infectious; laughing and yawning. By virtue of the mysterious operation to which Gwynplaine had probably been subjected in his infancy, every part of his face contributed to that rictus; his whole physiognomy led to that result, as a wheel centres

in a nave. All his emotions, whatever they might have been, augmented his strange face of joy, or to speak more correctly, aggravated it. Any astonishment which might seize him, any suffering which he might feel, any anger which might take possession of him, any pity which might move him, would only increase this hilarity of his muscles. If he wept, he laughed; and whatever Gwynplaine was, whatever he wished to be, whatever he thought, the moment that he raised his head, the crowd, if crowd there was, had before them one impersonation: an overwhelming burst of laughter.

It was like a head of Medusa, but Medusa hilarious. All feeling or thought in the mind of the spectator was suddenly put to flight by the unexpected apparition, and laughter was inevitable. Antique art formerly placed on the outsides of the Greek theatre a joyous brazen face, called Comedy. It laughed and occasioned laughter, but remained pensive. All parody which borders on folly, all irony which borders on wisdom, were condensed and amalgamated in that face. The burthen of care, of disillusion, anxiety and grief were expressed in its impassive countenance, and resulted in a lugubrious sum of mirth. One corner of the mouth was raised, in mockery of the human race; the other side, in blasphemy of the gods. Men confronted that model of the ideal sarcasm and exemplification of the irony which each one possesses within him; and the crowd, continually renewed round its fixed laugh, died away with delight before its sepulchral immobility of mirth.

One might almost have said that Gwynplaine was that dark, dead mask of ancient comedy, adjusted to the body of a living man. That infernal head of implacable hilarity he supported on his neck. What a weight for the shoulders of a man—an everlasting laugh!

An everlasting laugh!

Let us understand each other; we will explain. The Manichians believed the absolute occasionally gives way, and that God himself sometimes abdicates for a time. So also of the will. We do not admit that it can ever be utterly powerless. The whole of existence resembles a letter modified in the postscript. For Gwynplaine the postscript was this: by the force of his will, and by concentrating all his attention, and on condi-

tion that no emotion should come to distract and turn away the fixedness of his effort, he could manage to suspend the everlasting rictus of his face, and to throw over it a kind of tragic veil, and then the spectator laughed no longer; he shuddered.

This exertion Gwynplaine scarcely ever made. It was a terrible effort, and an insupportable tension. Moreover, it happened that on the slightest distraction, or the slightest emotion, the laugh, driven back for a moment, returned like a tide with an impulse which was irresistible in proportion to the force of the adverse emotion.

With this exception, Gwynplaine's laugh was everlasting.

On seeing Gwynplaine, all laughed. When they had laughed they turned away their heads. Women especially shrank from him with horror. The man was frightful. The joyous convulsion of laughter was as a tribute paid; they submitted to it gladly, but almost mechanically. Besides, when once the novelty of the laugh had passed over, Gwynplaine was intolerable for a woman to see, and impossible to contemplate.

But he was tall, well made, and agile, and no way deformed, excepting in his face.

This led to the presumption that Gwynplaine was rather a creation of art than a work of nature. Gwynplaine, beautiful in figure, had probably been beautiful in face. At his birth he had no doubt resembled other infants. They had left the body intact, and retouched only the face.

Gwynplaine had been made to order,—at least, that was probable. They had left him his teeth; teeth are necessary to a laugh. The death's head retains them. The operation performed on him must have been frightful. That he had no remembrance of it was no proof that it had not taken place. Surgical sculpture of the kind could never have succeeded except on a very young child, and consequently on one having little consciousness of what happened to him, and who might easily take a wound for a sickness. Besides we must remember that they had in those times means of putting patients to sleep, and of suppressing all suffering; only then it was magic, while now it is called anæsthesia.

Besides this face, those who had brought him up had given him the resources of a gymnast, and an athlete. His articulations usefully displaced and fashioned to bending

the wrong way, had received the education of a clown, and could, like the hinges of a door, move backwards and forwards. In appropriating him to the profession of monte-bank nothing had been neglected. His hair had been dyed with ochre once for all; a secret which had been rediscovered at the present day. Pretty women use it, and that which was formerly considered ugly is now considered an embellishment. Gwynplaine had yellow hair. His hair having probably been dyed with some corrosive preparation, had left it woolly and rough to the touch. Its yellow bristles, rather a mane than a head of hair, covered and concealed a lofty brow, evidently made to contain thought. The operation, whatever it had been, which had deprived his features of harmony, and put all their flesh into disorder, had had no effect on the bony structure of his head. The facial angle was powerful and surprisingly grand. Behind his laugh there was a soul, dreaming, as all our souls dream.

However, his laugh was to Gwynplaine quite a talent. He could do nothing with it, so he turned it to account. By means of it he gained his living.

Gwynplaine, as you have doubtless already guessed, was the child abandoned one winter evening on the coast of Portland. and received into a poor caravan at Weymouth.

## CHAPTER II.

### DEA.

THAT boy was at this time a man. Fifteen years had elapsed. It was in 1705. Gwynplaine was in his twenty-fifth year.

Ursus had kept the two children with him. They were a group of wanderers. Ursus and Homo had aged. Ursus had become quite bald. The wolf was growing grey. The age of wolves is not ascertained like that of dogs. According to Molière, there are wolves which live to eighty, amongst others the little koupara, and the rank wolf, the *Canis nubilus* of Say.

The little girl found on the dead woman was now a tall creature of sixteen, with brown hair, slight, fragile, almost trembling from delicacy, and almost inspiring fear lest she should break; admirably beautiful, her eyes full of light, yet blind. That fatal winter night which threw down the beggar

woman and her infant in the snow had struck a double blow. It had killed the mother and blinded the child. Gutta serena had for ever paralyzed the eyes of the girl, now become woman in her turn. On her face, through which the light of day never passed, the depressed corners of the mouth indicated the bitterness of the privation. Her eyes, large and clear, had a strange quality: extinguished for ever to her, to others they were brilliant. They were mysterious torches lighting only the outside. They gave light but possessed it not. These sightless eyes were resplendent. A captive of shadow, she lighted up the dull place she inhabited. From the depth of her incurable darkness, from behind the black wall called blindness, she flung her rays. She saw not the sun without, but her soul was perceptible from within.

In her dead look there was a celestial earnestness. She was the night, and from the irremediable darkness with which she was amalgamated, she came out a star.

Ursus with his mania for Latin names, had christened her *Dea*. He had taken his wolf into consultation. He had said to him, "You represent man, I represent the beasts. We are of the lower world, this little one shall represent the world on high. Such feebleness is all-powerful. In this manner the universe shall be complete in our hut in its three orders—human, animal, and Divine." The wolf made no objection. Therefore the foundling was called *Dea*.

As to Gwynplaine, Ursus had not had the trouble of inventing a name for him. The morning of the day on which he had realized the disfigurement of the little boy and the blindness of the infant, he had asked him, "Boy, what is your name?" and the boy had answered, "They call me Gwynplaine." "Be Gwynplaine then," said Ursus.

*Dea* assisted Gwynplaine in his performances. If human misery could be summed up, it might have been summed up in Gwynplaine and *Dea*. Each seemed born in a compartment of the sepulchre; Gwynplaine in the horrible, *Dea* in the darkness. Their existences were shadowed by two different kinds of darkness, taken from the two formidable sides of night. *Dea* had that shadow in her, Gwynplaine had it on him. There was a phantom in *Dea*, a spectre in Gwynplaine. *Dea* was sunk in the mournful,





Gwynplaine in something worse. There was for Gwynplaine, who could see, a heartrending possibility that existed not for Dea, who was blind; he could compare himself with other men. Now, in a situation such as that of Gwynplaine, admitting that he should seek to examine it, to compare himself with others was to understand himself no more. To have, like Dea, empty sight from which the world is absent, is a supreme distress, yet less than to be an enigma to oneself; to feel that something is wanting here as well, and that something, oneself; to see the universe and not to see oneself. Dea had a veil over her, the night; Gwynplaine a mask, his face. Inexpressible fact, it was by his own flesh that Gwynplaine was masked! What his visage had been, he knew not. His face had vanished. They had affixed to him a false self. He had for a face, a disappearance. His head lived, his face was dead. He never remembered to have seen it. Mankind was for Gwynplaine, as for Dea, an exterior fact. It was far-off. She was alone, he was alone. The isolation of Dea was funereal, she saw nothing; that of Gwynplaine sinister, he saw all things. For Dea creation never passed the bounds of touch and hearing; reality was bounded, limited, short, immediately lost. Nothing was infinite to her but darkness. For Gwynplaine to live was to have the crowd for ever before him and outside him. Dea was the proscribed from light, Gwynplaine the banned of life. They were beyond the pale of hope, and had reached the depth of possible calamity; they had sunk into it, both of them. An observer who had watched them would have felt his reverie melt into immeasurable pity. What must they not have suffered! The decree of misfortune weighed visibly on these human creatures, and never had fate encompassed two beings who had done nothing to deserve it, and more clearly turned destiny into torture, and life into hell.

They were in a Paradise.

They were in love.

Gwynplaine adored Dea. Dea idolized Gwynplaine.

"How beautiful you are!" she would say to him.

### CHAPTER III.

"OCULOS NON HABET, ET VIDET."

ONLY one woman on earth saw Gwynplaine. It was the blind girl. She had

learned what Gwynplaine had done for her, from Ursus, to whom he had related his rough journey from Portland to Weymouth, and the many sufferings which he had endured when deserted by the gang. She knew that when an infant dying upon her dead mother, suckling a corpse, a being scarcely bigger than herself had taken her up; that this being, exiled, and, as it were, buried under the refusal of the universe to aid him, had heard her cry; that all the world being deaf to him, he had not been deaf to her; that the child, alone, weak, cast off, without resting-place here below, dragging himself over the waste, exhausted by fatigue, crushed, had accepted from the hands of night a burden, another child; that he, who had nothing to expect in that obscure distribution which we call fate, had charged himself with a destiny; that naked, in anguish and distress, he had made himself a Providence; that when heaven had closed he had opened his heart; that, himself lost, he had saved: that having neither roof-tree nor shelter, he had been an asylum; that he had made himself mother and nurse; that he who was alone in the world had responded to desertion by adoption; that lost in the darkness he had given an example: that, as if not already sufficiently burdened, he had added to his load another's misery; that in this world, which seemed to contain nothing for him, he had found a duty; that where everyone else would have hesitated, he had advanced; that where everyone else would have drawn back, he consented; that he had put his hand into the jaws of the grave and drawn out her—Dea. That, himself half-naked, he had given her his rags, because she was cold; that famished, he had thought of giving her food and drink; that for one little creature, another little creature had combated death; that he had fought it under every form; under the form of winter and snow, under the form of solitude, under the form of terror, under the form of cold, hunger, and thirst, under the form of whirlwind; and that for her, Dea, this Titan of ten had given battle to the immensity of night. She knew that as a child he had done this, and that now as a man, he was strength to her weakness, riches to her poverty, healing to her sickness, and sight to her blindness. Through the mist of the unknown by which she felt herself encompassed, she distinguished clearly his devo-



tion, his abnegation, his courage. Heroism in immaterial regions has an outline; she distinguished this sublime outline. In the inexpressible abstraction in which thought lives unlighted by the sun, Dea perceived this mysterious lineament of virtue. In the surrounding of dark things put in motion, which was the only impression made on her by reality; in the uneasy stagnation of a creature, always passive, yet always on the watch for possible evil; in the sensation of being ever defenceless, which is the life of the blind; she felt Gwynplaine above her; Gwynplaine never cold, never absent, never obscured; Gwynplaine sympathetic, helpful, and sweet-tempered. Dea quivered with certainty and gratitude, her anxiety changed into ecstasy, and with her shadowy eyes she contemplated on the zenith from the depth of her abyss, the rich light of his goodness. In the ideal, kindness is the sun; and Gwynplaine dazzled Dea.

To the crowd, which has too many heads to have a thought, and too many eyes to have a sight,—to the crowd who, superficial themselves, judge only of the surface. Gwynplaine was a clown, a merry-andrew, a mountebank, a creature grotesque, a little more and a little less than a beast. The crowd knew only the face.

For Dea, Gwynplaine was the saviour who had gathered her into his arms in the tomb, and borne her out of it; the consoler who made life tolerable; the liberator, whose hand, holding her own, guided her through that labyrinth called blindness. Gwynplaine was her brother, friend, guide, support; the personification of heavenly power, the husband, winged and resplendent. Where the multitude saw the monster, Dea recognized the archangel. It was that Dea, blind, perceived his soul.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### WELL-MATCHED LOVERS.

URSUS being a philosopher, understood. He approved of the fascination of Dea. He said: the blind see the invisible. He said: conscience is vision. Then, looking at Gwynplaine, he murmured: semi-monster, but demi-god.

Gwynplaine, on the other hand, was madly in love with Dea.

There is the invisible eye, the spirit, and the visible eye, the pupil. He saw her with the visible eye. Dea was dazzled by the ideal; Gwynplaine, by the real. Gwynplaine was not ugly; he was frightful. He saw his contrast before him: in proportion as he was terrible, Dea was sweet. He was horror; she was grace. Dea was his dream. She seemed a vision scarcely embodied. There was in her whole person, in her Grecian form, in her fine and supple figure, swaying like a reed; in her shoulders, on which might have been invisible wings; in the modest curves which indicated her sex, to the soul rather than to the senses; in her fairness, which amounted almost to transparency; in the august and reserved serenity of her look, divinely shut out from earth; in the sacred innocence of her smile, she was almost an angel, and yet just a woman.

Gwynplaine, we have said, compared himself and compared Dea.

His existence, such as it was, was the result of a double and unheard-of choice. It was the point of intersection of two rays; one from below and one from above—a black and a white ray. To the same crumb, perhaps pecked at, at once, by the beaks of evil and good, one gave the bite, the other the kiss. Gwynplaine was this crumb—an atom, wounded and caressed. Gwynplaine was the product of fatality combined with Providence. Misfortune had placed its finger on him; happiness as well. Two extreme destinies composed his strange lot. He had on him an anathema and a benediction. He was the elect, cursed. Who was he? He knew not. When he looked at himself, he saw one he knew not; but this unknown was a monster. Gwynplaine lived as it were beheaded, with a face which did not belong to him. This face was frightful, so frightful that it was absurd. It caused as much fear as laughter. It was a hell-concocted absurdity. It was the shipwreck of a human face into the mask of an animal. Never had been seen so total an eclipse of humanity in a human face; never parody more complete; never had an apparition more frightful grinned in nightmare; never had everything repulsive to woman been more hideously amalgamated in a man. The unfortunate heart, masked and calumniated by the face, seemed for ever condemned to solitude under it, as under a tombstone.

Yet, no! Where unknown malice has done

its worst, invisible goodness has lent its aid. In the poor fallen one, suddenly raised up, by the side of the repulsive, it had placed the attractive; on the barren shoal it had set the loadstone; it had caused a soul to fly with swift wings towards the deserted one; it had sent the dove to console the creature whom the thunderbolt had overwhelmed, and had made duty adore deformity. For this to be possible it was necessary that beauty should not see the disfigurement. For this good fortune misfortune was required. Providence had made Dea blind.

Gwynplaine vaguely felt himself the object of a redemption. Why had he been persecuted? He knew not. Why redeemed? He knew not. All he knew was that a halo had encircled his brand. When Gwynplaine had been old enough to understand, Ursus had read and explained to him the text of Doctor Conquest *de Denasatis*, and in another folio, Hugo Plagon, the passage, *Nares habens mutilas*; but Ursus had prudently abstained from "hypotheses," and had been reserved in his opinion of what it might mean. Suppositions were possible. The probability of violence inflicted on Gwynplaine when an infant was hinted at, but for Gwynplaine the result was the only evidence. His destiny was to live under a stigma. Why this stigma; There was no answer.

Silence and solitude were around Gwynplaine. All was uncertain in the conjectures which could be fitted to the tragical reality; excepting the terrible fact, nothing was certain. In his discouragement Dea intervened a sort of celestial interposition between him and despair. He perceived, melted and inspirited by the sweetness of the beautiful girl who turned to him, that horrible as he was, a beautiful wonder affected his wondrous visage. Having been fashioned to create dread, he was the object of a miraculous exception, that it was admired and adored in the ideal by the light; and, monster that he was, he felt himself the contemplation of a star.

Gwynplaine and Dea were united, and these two suffering hearts adored each other. One nest and two birds, that was their story. They had begun to feel a universal law—to please, to seek, and to find each other.

Thus hatred had made a mistake. The persecutors of Gwynplaine, whoever they might have been—the deadly enigma, from wherever it came, had missed their aim. They

had intended to drive him to desperation: they had succeeded in driving him into enchantment. They had affianced him beforehand to a healing wound. They had predestined him for consolation by an affliction. The pincers of the executioner had softly changed into the delicately-moulded hand of a girl. Gwynplaine was horrible; artificially horrible—made horrible by the hand of man. They had hoped to exile him for ever: first, from his family, if his family existed, and then from humanity. When an infant, they had made him a ruin; of this ruin Nature had repossessed herself, as she does of all ruins. This solitude Nature had consoled as she consoles all solitudes. Nature comes to the succor of the deserted; where all is lacking she gives back her whole self. She flourishes and grows green amid ruins; she has ivy for the stones, and love for man.

Profound generosity of the shadows!

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BLUE SKY THROUGH THE BLACK CLOUD.

THUS lived these unfortunate creatures together, Dea, relying; Gwynplaine, accepted. These orphans were all in all to each other, the feeble and the deformed. The widowed were betrothed. An inexpressible thanksgiving arose out of their distress. They were grateful. To whom? To the obscure immensity. Be grateful in your own hearts. That suffices. Thanksgiving has wings, and flies to its right destination. Your prayer knows its way better than you can.

How many men have believed that they prayed to Jupiter, when they prayed to Jehovah! How many believers in amulets are listened to by the Almighty! How many atheists there are who know not that, in the simple fact of being good and sad, they pray to God!

Gwynplaine and Dea were grateful. Deformity is expulsion. Blindness is a precipice. The expelled one had been adopted; the precipice was habitable.

Gwynplaine had seen a brilliant light descending on him, in an arrangement of destiny which seemed to put, in the perspective of a dream, a white cloud of beauty having the form of a woman, a radiant vision in which there was a heart; and the phantom, almost a cloud and yet a woman, clasped him; and

the apparition embraced him; and the heart desired him. Gwynplaine was no longer deformed. He was beloved. The rose demanded the caterpillar in marriage, feeling that within the caterpillar there was a divine butterfly. Gwynplaine the rejected, was chosen. To have one's desire is everything. Gwynplaine had his, Dea hers.

The abjection of the disfigured man was exalted and dilated into intoxication, into delight, into belief; and a hand was stretched out towards the melancholy hesitation of the blind girl, to guide her in her darkness.

It was the penetration of two misfortunes into the ideal, which absorbed them. The rejected found a refuge in each other. Two blanks, combining, filled each other up. They held together by what they lacked: in that in which one was poor, the other was rich. The misfortune of the one made the treasure of the other. Had Dea not been blind, would she have chosen Gwynplaine? Had Gwynplaine not been disfigured, would he have preferred Dea? She would probably have rejected the deformed, as he would have passed by the infirm. What happiness for Dea that Gwynplaine was hideous! What good fortune for Gwynplaine that Dea was blind! Apart from their providential matching, they were impossible to each other. A mighty want of each other was at the bottom of their loves. Gwynplaine saved Dea. Dea saved Gwynplaine. Apposition of misery produced adherence. It was the embrace of those swallowed in the abyss; none closer, none more hopeless, none more exquisite.

Gwynplaine had a thought. "What should I be without her?" Dea had a thought. "What should I be without him?"

The exile of each made a country for both. The two incurable fatalities, the stigmata of Gwynplaine and the blindness of Dea, joined them together in contentment. They sufficed to each other. They imagined nothing beyond each other. To speak to one another was a delight, to approach was beatitude; by force of reciprocal intuition they became united in the same reverie, and thought the same thoughts. In Gwynplaine's tread, Dea believed that she heard the step of one deified. They tightened their mutual grasp in a sort of sidereal *chiaroscuro*, full of perfumes, of gleams, of music, of the luminous architecture of dreams. They belonged to each other; they knew themselves to be for ever united

in the same joy and the same ecstasy; and nothing could be stranger than this construction of an Eden by two of the damned.

They were inexpressibly happy. In their hell they had created heaven. Such was thy power, O Love! Dea heard Gwynplaine's laugh; Gwynplaine saw Dea's smile. Thus ideal felicity was found, the perfect joy of life was realized, the mysterious problem of happiness was solved; and by whom? By two outcasts.

For Gwynplaine, Dea was splendor. For Dea, Gwynplaine was presence. Presence is that profound mystery which renders the invisible world divine, and from which results that other mystery,—confidence. In religions this is the only thing which is irreducible; but this irreducible thing suffices. The great motive power is not seen; it is felt.

Gwynplaine was the religion of Dea. Sometimes, lost in her sense of love toward him, she knelt, like a beautiful priestess before a gnome in a pagoda, made happy by her adoration.

Imagine to yourself an abyss, and in its centre an oasis of light, and in this oasis two creatures shut out of life, dazzling each other. No purity could be compared to their loves. Dea was ignorant what a kiss might be, though perhaps she desired it; because blindness, especially in a woman, has its dreams, and though trembling at the approaches of the unknown, does not fear them all. As to Gwynplaine, his sensitive youth made him pensive. The more delirious he felt, the more timid he became. He might have dared anything with this companion of his early youth, with this creature as innocent of fault as of the light, with this blind girl who saw but one thing—that she adored him! But he would have thought it a theft to take what she might have given; so he resigned himself with a melancholy satisfaction to love angelically, and the conviction of his deformity resolved itself into a proud purity.

These happy creatures dwelt in the ideal. They were spouses in it at distances as opposite as the spheres. They exchanged in its firmament the deep effluvium which is in infinity attraction, and on earth the sexes. Their kisses were the kisses of souls.

They had always lived a common life. They knew themselves only in each other's society. The infancy of Dea had coincided with the youth of Gwynplaine. They had

grown up side by side. For a long time they had slept in the same bed, for the hut was not a large bedchamber. They lay on the chest, Ursus on the floor; that was the arrangement. One fine day, whilst Dea was still very little, Gwynplaine felt himself grown up, and it was in the youth that shame arose. He said to Ursus, "I will also sleep on the floor." And at night he stretched himself, with the old man, on the bear skin. Then Dea wept. She cried for her bedfellow; but Gwynplaine, become restless because he had begun to love, decided to remain where he was. From that time he always slept by the side of Ursus on the planks. In the summer, when the nights were fine, he slept outside with Homo.

When thirteen Dea had not yet become resigned to the arrangement. Often in the evening she said, "Gwynplaine, come close to me; that will put me to sleep." A man lying by her side was a necessity to her innocent slumbers.

Nudity is to see that one is naked. She ignored nudity. It was the ingenuousness of Arcadia of Otaheite. Dea untaught, made Gwynplaine wild. Sometimes it happened that Dea, when almost reaching youth, combed her long hair as she sat on her bed,—her chemise unfastened and falling off revealed indications of a feminine outline, and a vague commencement of Eve,—and would call Gwynplaine. Gwynplaine blushed, lowered his eyes, and knew not what to do in presence of this innocent creature. Stammering, he turned his head, feared, and fled. The Daphnis of darkness took flight before the Chloe of shadow.

Such was the idyll blooming in a tragedy.

Ursus said to them,—

"Old brutes! adore each other!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### URSUS AS TUTOR, AND URSUS AS GUARDIAN.

URSUS added,—

"Some of these days I will play them a nasty trick. I will marry them."

Ursus taught Gwynplaine the theory of love. He said to him,—

"Do you know how the Almighty lights the fire called love? He places the woman underneath, the devil between, and the man

at the top. A match—that is to say, a look—and behold, it is all on fire."

"A look is unnecessary," exclaimed Gwynplaine, thinking of Dea.

And Ursus replied,—

"Booby! do souls require mortal eyes to see each other?"

Ursus was a good fellow at times. Gwynplaine, sometimes madly in love with Dea, became melancholy, and made use of the presence of Ursus as a guard on himself. One day Ursus said to him,—

"Bah! do not put yourself out. When in love, the cock shows himself."

"But the eagle conceals himself," replied Gwynplaine.

At other times Ursus would say to himself, apart,—

"It is wise to put spokes in the wheels of the Cytherean car. They love each other too much. This may have its disadvantages. Let us avoid a fire. Let us moderate these hearts."

Then Ursus had recourse to warnings of this nature, speaking to Gwynplaine when Dea slept, and to Dea when Gwynplaine's back was turned:—

"Dea, you must not be so fond of Gwynplaine. To live in the life of another is perilous. Egoism is a good root of happiness. Men escape from women. And then Gwynplaine might end by becoming infatuated with you. His success is so great! You have no idea how great his success is!"

"Gwynplaine, disproportions are no good. So much ugliness on one side and so much beauty on another, ought to compel reflection. Temper your ardor, my boy. Do not become too enthusiastic about Dea. Do you seriously consider that you are made for her? Just think of your deformity and her perfection? See the distance between her and yourself. She has everything, this Dea. What a white skin! What hair! Lips like strawberries! And her foot! her hand! Those shoulders, with their exquisite curve! Her expression is sublime. She walks diffusing light; and in speaking, the grave tone of her voice is charming. But for all this, to think that she is a woman! She would not be such a fool as to be an angel. She is absolute beauty. Repeat all this to yourself, to calm your ardor."

These speeches redoubled the love of Gwynplaine and Dea, and Ursus was astonished at

his want of success, just as one who should say, "It is singular, that with all the oil I throw on fire, I cannot extinguish it."

Did he, then, desire to extinguish their love, or to cool it even?

Certainly not. He would have been well punished had he succeeded. At the bottom of his heart this love, which was flame for them and warmth for him, was his delight.

But it is natural to grate a little against that which charms us; men call it wisdom.

Ursus had been, in his relations with Gwynplaine and Dea, almost a father and a mother. Grumbling all the while, he had brought them up; grumbling all the while he had nourished them. His adoption of them had made the hut roll more heavily, and he had been oftener compelled to harness himself by Homo's side, to help to draw it.

We may observe, however, that after the first two years, when Gwynplaine was nearly grown up, and Ursus had grown quite old, Gwynplaine, had taken his turn, and drawn Ursus.

Ursus seeing that Gwynplaine was becoming a man, had cast the horoscope of his deformity. "*It has made your fortune!*" he had told him.

This family of an old man and two children, with a wolf, had become, as they wandered, a group more and more intimately united. Their errant life had not hindered education. "To wander is to grow," Ursus said. Gwynplaine was evidently made to exhibit at fairs. Ursus had cultivated in him feats of dexterity, and had encrusted him as much as possible with all he himself possessed of science and wisdom.

Ursus, contemplating the perplexing mask of Gwynplaine's face, often growled,—

"He has begun well." It was for this reason that he had perfected him with every ornament of philosophy and wisdom.

He repeated constantly to Gwynplaine,—

"Be a philosopher. To be wise, is to be invulnerable. You see what I am. I have never shed a tear. This is the result of my wisdom. Do you think what occasion for tears has been wanting had I felt disposed to weep?"

Ursus, in one of his monologues in the hearing of the wolf, said,—

"I have taught Gwynplaine everything, Latin included. I have taught Dea nothing, music included."

He had taught them both to sing. He had himself a pretty talent for playing on the oaten reed, a little flute of that period. He played on it agreeably, as also on the *chiffonie*, a sort of a beggar's hurdy-gurdy, mentioned in the Chronicle of Bertrand Duguesclin as the "truant instrument," which started the symphony. These instruments attracted the crowd. Ursus would show them the *chiffonie*, and say, "It is called organistrian in Latin."

He had taught Dea and Gwynplaine to sing according to the method of Orpheus and of Egide Blinchois. Frequently he interrupted the lessons with cries of enthusiasm, such as "Orpheus, musician of Greece! Binchois musician of Picardy!"

These branches of careful culture did not occupy the children so as to prevent their adoring each other. They had mingled their hearts together as they grew up, as two saplings planted near, mingle their branches as they become trees.

No matter," said Ursus, "I will marry them."

Then he grumbled to himself,—

"They are quite tiresome with their love."

The past, their little past, at least, had no existence for Dea and Gwynplaine. They knew only what Ursus had told them of it. They called Ursus father. The only remembrance which Gwynplaine had of his infancy was as of a passage of demons over his cradle. He had an impression of having been trodden in the darkness under deformed feet. Was this intentional or not? He was ignorant on this point. That which he remembered clearly and to the slightest detail were his tragical adventures when deserted at Portland. The finding of Dea made that dismal night a radiant date for him.

The memory of Dea, even more than that of Gwynplaine was lost in clouds. In so young a child all remembrance melts away. She recollected her mother as something cold. Had she ever seen the sun? Perhaps so. She made efforts to pierce into the blank which was her past life.

"The sun! what was it?"

She had some vague memory of a thing luminous and warm, of which Gwynplaine had taken the place.

They spoke to each other in low tones. It is certain that cooing is the most important thing in the World. Dea often said to Gwynplaine,—

"Light means that you are speaking."

Once, no longer containing himself, as he saw through a muslin sleeve the arm of Dea, Gwynplaine brushed its transparency with his lips; ideal kiss of a deformed mouth! Dea felt a deep delight; she blushed like a rose. This kiss from a monster made Aurora gleam on that beautiful brow full of night. However, Gwynplaine sighed with a kind of terror, and as the neckerchief of Dea gaped, he could not refrain from looking at the whiteness visible through that glimpse of Paradise.

Dea pulled up her sleeve, and stretching towards Gwynplaine her naked arm, said,—  
"Again!"

Gwynplaine fled.

The next day the game was renewed, with variations.

It was a heavenly subsidence into that sweet abyss, called love.

At such things, heaven smiles philosophically.

## CHAPTER VII.

### BLINDNESS GIVES LESSONS IN CLAIRVOYANCE.

AT times Gwynplaine reproached himself. He made his happiness a case of conscience. He fancied that to allow a woman who could not see him to love him, was to deceive her.

What would she have said could she have suddenly obtained her sight? How she would have felt repulsed by what had previously attracted her! How she would have recoiled from her frightful loadstone! What a cry! What covering of her face! What a flight! A bitter scruple harassed him. He told himself that such a monster as he had no right to love. He was a hydra idolized by a star. It was his duty to enlighten the blind star.

One day he said to Dea,—

"You know that I am very ugly."

"I know that you are sublime," she answered.

He resumed,—

"When you hear all the world laugh, they laugh at me because I am horrible."

"I love you," said Dea.

After a silence, she added,—

"I was in death, you brought me to life.

When you are here, heaven is by my side. Give me your hand, that I may touch heaven."

Their hands met and grasped each other. They spoke no more, but were silent in the plenitude of love.

Ursus, who was crabbed, had overheard this. The next day when the three were together, he said,—

"For that matter, Dea is ugly also."

The word produced no effect. Dea and Gwynplaine were not listening. Absorbed in each other, they rarely heeded such exclamations of Ursus. Their depth was a dead loss.

This time, however, the precaution of Ursus, "*Dea is also ugly*," indicated in this learned man a certain knowledge of women. It is certain that Gwynplaine, in his loyalty, had been guilty of an imprudence. To have said, *I am ugly*, to any other blind girl than Dea, might have been dangerous. To be blind, and in love, is to be twofold blind. In such a situation, dreams are dreamt. Illusion is the food of dreams. Take illusion from love, and you take from it its aliment. It is compounded of every enthusiasm, of both physical and moral admiration.

Moreover, you should never tell a woman a word difficult to understand. She will dream about it, and she often dreams falsely. An enigma in a reverie spoils it. The shock caused by the fall of a careless word displaces that against which it strikes. At times it happens, without our knowing why, that because we have received the obscure blow of a chance word, the heart empties itself insensibly of love. He who loves, perceives a decline in his happiness. Nothing is to be feared more than this slow exudation from the fissure in the vase.

Happily, Dea was not formed of such clay. The stuff of which other women are made had not been used in her construction. She had a rare nature. The frame, but not the heart, was fragile. A divine perseverance in love, was in the heart of her being.

The whole disturbance which the word used by Gwynplaine had produced in her, ended in her saying one day,—

"To be ugly,—what is it? It is to do wrong. Gwynplaine only does good. He is handsome."

Then, under the form of interrogation so familiar to children and to the blind, she resumed,—

"To see?—what is it that you call seeing. For my own part I cannot see; I know. It seems that *to see*, means to hide."

"What do you mean?" said Gwynplaine.

Dea answered,—

"To see, is a thing which conceals the true."

"No," said Gwynplaine.

"But yes," replied Dea, "Since you say you are ugly."

She reflected a moment, and then said, "Story teller!"

Gwynplaine felt the joy of having confessed, and of not being believed. Both his conscience and his love were consoled.

Thus they had reached, Dea sixteen, Gwynplaine nearly twenty-five. They were not, as would now be expressed, "more advanced" than the first day. Less, even; for it may be remembered that on their wedding night she was nine months and he ten years old. A sort of holy childhood had continued in their love. Thus it sometimes happens that the belated nightingale prolongs her nocturnal song till dawn.

Their caresses went no further than pressing hands, or lips brushing a naked arm. Soft, half articulate, whispers sufficed them.

Twenty-four and sixteen! So it happened that Ursus, who did not lose sight of the ill-turn he intended to do them, said,—

"One of these days you must choose a religion."

"Wherefore?" inquired Gwynplaine.

"That you may marry."

"That is already done," said Dea.

Dea did not understand that they could be more than man and wife than they were already.

At bottom this chimerical and virginal content, this innocent union of souls, this celibacy taken for marriage, was not displeasing to Ursus. He had said what he had said because he thought it necessary. But the medical knowledge he possessed convinced him that Dea, if not too young, was too fragile and delicate for what he called "Hymen in flesh and bone."

That would come soon enough. Besides, were they not already married? If the indissoluble existed anywhere, was it not in their union? Gwynplaine and Dea! They were creatures worthy of the love they mutually felt, flung by misfortune into each other's arms. And as if they were not

enough in this first link, love had survened on misfortune, and had attached them, united and bound them together. What power could ever break that iron chain, bound with knots of flowers? They were indeed bound together,

Dea had beauty, Gwynplaine had sight. Each brought a dowery. They were more than coupled; they were paired; separated solely by the sacred interposition of innocence.

Though dream as Gwynplaine would, however, and absorb all meaner passions as he could, in the contemplation of Dea and before the tribunal of conscience, he was a man. Fatal laws are not to be eluded. He underwent, like everything else in nature, the obscure fermentations willed by the Creator. At times, therefore, he looked at the women who were in the crowd, but he immediately felt that the look was a sin, and hastened to retire, repentant, into his own soul.

Let us add that he met with no encouragement. On the face of every woman who looked upon him, he saw aversion, antipathy, repugnance and rejection. It was clear that no other than Dea was possible for him. This aided his repentance.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### NOT ONLY HAPPINESS, BUT PROSPERITY.

WHAT true things are told in stories! The burnt scar of the invisible fiend who has touched you is remorse for a wicked thought. In Gwynplaine evil thoughts never ripened, and he had therefore no remorse. Sometimes he felt regret.

Vague mists of conscience.

What was this?

Nothing.

Their happiness was complete; so complete that they were no longer even poor.

From 1689 to 1704 a great change had taken place.

It happened sometimes in the year 1704, that as night fell on some little village on the coast, a great, heavy van, drawn by a pair of stout horses, made its entry. It was like the shell of a vessel reversed, the keel for a roof, the deck for a floor, placed on four wheels. The wheels were all of the same size, and high as wagon wheels. Wheels, pole, and van were all painted green, with a

rythmical gradation of shades, which ranged from bottle green for the wheels, to apple green for the roofing. This green color had succeeded in drawing attention to the carriage, which was known in all the fair grounds as *The Green Box*. The green box had but two windows, one at each extremity, and at the back a door with steps to let down. On the roof, from a tube painted green like the rest, smoke arose. This moving house was always varnished and washed afresh. In front, on a ledge fastened to the van, with the window for a door, behind the horses and by the side of an old man who held the reins and directed the team, two gypsy women, dressed as goddesses, sounded their trumpets. The astonishment with which the villagers regarded this machine was overwhelming.

This was the old establishment of Ursus, its proportions augmented by success, and improved from a wretched booth into a theatre. A kind of animal, between dog and wolf, was chained under the van. This was *Homo*. The old coachman who drove the horses was the philosopher himself.

Whence came this improvement from the miserable hut to the Olympic caravan?

From this;—Gwynplaine had become famous.

It was with a correct scent of what would succeed amongst men that Ursus had said to Gwynplaine,—

“They made your fortune.”

Ursus, it may be remembered, had made Gwynplaine his pupil. Unknown people had worked upon his face: he, on the other hand, had worked on his mind; and behind this well-executed mask, he had placed all that he could of thought. So soon as the growth of the child had rendered him fitted for it, he had brought him out on the stage; that is, he had produced him in front of the van.

The effect of his appearance had been surprising. The passers-by were immediately struck with wonder. Never had anything been seen to be compared to this extraordinary mimic of laughter. They were ignorant how the miracle of infectious hilarity had been obtained. Some believed it to be natural, others declared it to be artificial, and as conjecture was added to reality, everywhere, at every cross-road on the journey, in all the grounds of fairs and fêtes, the crowd ran after Gwynplaine. Thanks to this great attraction, there had come into the purse of the poor

wandering group, first a rain of farthings, then of heavy pennies, and finally of shillings. The curiosity of one place exhausted, they passed on to another. Rolling does not enrich a stone, but it enriches a caravan; and year by year, from city to city, with the increased growth of Gwynplaine's person and of his ugliness, the fortune predicted by Ursus had come.

“What a good turn they did you there, my boy, said Ursus.

This “fortune” had allowed Ursus, who was the administrator of Gwynplaine's success, to have the chariot of his dreams constructed,—that is to say, a caravan large enough to carry a theatre, and to sow science and art in the highways. Moreover, Ursus had been able to add to the group composed of himself, *Homo*, Gwynplaine, and *Dea*, two horses and two women, who were the goddesses of the troupe, as we have just said, and its servants. A mythological frontispiece was in those days, of service to a caravan of mountebanks.

“We are a wandering temple,” said Ursus.

These two gipsies, picked up by the philosopher from amongst the vagabondage of cities and suburbs, were ugly and young, and were called, by order of Ursus, the one *Phœbe*, and the other *Venus*.

For these read *Fibi* and *Vinos*, that we may conform to English pronunciation.

*Phœbe* cooked; *Venus* scrubbed the temple.

Moreover, on days of performance they dressed *Dea*.

Mountebanks have their public life as well as princes, and on these occasions *Dea* was arrayed, like *Fibi* and *Vinos*, in a Florentine petticoat of flowered stuff, and a woman's jacket without sleeves, leaving the arms bare. Ursus and Gwynplaine wore men's jackets, and, like sailors on board a man-of-war, great loose trousers, Gwynplaine had, besides, for his work and for his feats of strength, round his neck and over his shoulders, an esclavine of leather. He took charge of the horses. Ursus and *Homo* took charge of each other.

*Dea*, being used to the *Green Box*, came and went in the interior of the wheeled house, with almost as much ease and certainty as those who saw.

The eye which could penetrate within the structure and its internal arrangements, might have perceived in a corner, fastened to the planks and immovable on its four



wheels, the old hut of Ursus, placed on half-pay, allowed to rust, and from thenceforth dispensed the labor of rolling, as Ursus was relieved from the labor of drawing it.

This hut, in a corner at the back, to the right of the door, served as bed-chamber and dressing-room to Ursus and Gwynplaine. It now contained two beds. In the opposite corner was the kitchen.

The arrangement of a vessel was not more precise and concise than that of the interior of the Green Box. Everything within it was in its place, arranged, foreseen, and intended.

The caravan was divided into three compartments, partitioned from each other. These communicated by open spaces without doors. A piece of stuff fell over them, and answered the purpose of concealment. The compartment behind belonged to the men, the compartment in front to the women, the compartment in the middle, separating the two sexes was the stage. The instruments of the orchestra and the properties were kept in the kitchen. A loft under the arch of the roof contained the scenes, and on opening a trap-door lamps appeared, producing wonders of light.

Ursus was the poet of these magical representations; he wrote the pieces. He had a diversity of talents; he was clever at sleight of hand. Besides the voices he imitated, he produced all sorts of unexpected things: shocks of light and darkness; spontaneous formations of figures or words, as he willed, on the partition; vanishing figures in chiar-oscuro; strange things, amidst which he seemed to meditate, unmindful of the crowd who marvelled at him.

One day Gwynplaine said to him,—

“Father, you look like a sorcerer!”

And Ursus replied,—

“Then I look, perhaps, like what I am.”

The Green Box, built on a clear model of Ursus's, contained this refinement of ingenuity—that between the fore and hind wheels, the central panel of the left side turned on hinges by the aid of chains and pulleys, and could be let down at will like a drawbridge. As it dropped it set at liberty three legs on hinges, which supported the panel when let down, and which placed themselves straight on the ground like the legs of a table, and supported it above the earth like a platform. This exposed the stage, which was thus enlarged by the platform in front.

This opening looked for all the world like a “mouth of hell,” in the words of the itinerant Puritan Preachers, who turned away from it with horror. It was, perhaps, for some such impious invention that Solon kicked out Thespis.

For all that Thespis had lasted much longer than is generally believed. The travelling theatre is still in existence. It was on those stages on wheels that, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they performed in England the ballets and dances of Amner and Pilkinton; in France the pastorals of Gilbert Colin, in Flanders, at the annual fairs, the double choruses of Clement, called *Non Papa*; in Germany, the “Adam and Eve” of Theiles; and, in Italy, the Venetian exhibitions of Animuccia and of Cafossis, the “*Silvæ*” of Gesualdo, the “Prince of Venosa,” the “Satyr,” of Laura Guidiccioni, the “Despair of Philene,” the “Death of Ugolino,” by Vincent Galileo, father of the astronomer, which Vincent Galileo sang his own music, and accompanied himself on his viol de gamba; as well as all the first attempts of the Italian opera, which from 1580, substituted free inspiration for the madrigal style.

The chariot, of the color of hope, which carried Ursus, Gwynplaine, and their fortunes, and in front of which Fibi and Vinos trumpeted like figures of Fame, played its part of this grand Bohemian and literary brotherhood. Thespis would no more have disowned Ursus, than Congrio would have disowned Gwynplaine.

Arrived at open spaces in towns or villages, Ursus, in the intervals between the too-tooing of Fibi and Vinos, gave instructive revelations as to the trumpetings.

“This symphony is Gregorian,” he would exclaim, “citizens and townsmen; the Gregorian form of worship, this great progress, is opposed in Italy to the Ambrosial ritual, and in Spain to the Mozarabic ceremonial, and has achieved its triumph over them with difficulty.”

After which the Green Box drew up in some place chosen by Ursus, and evening having fallen, and the panel stage having been let down, the theatre opened and the performance began.

The scene of the Green Box represented a landscape painted by Ursus; and, as he did not know how to paint, it represented a

cavern just as well as a landscape. The curtain, which we call drop nowadays, was a check silk, with squares of contrasted colors.

The public stood without, in the street, in the fair, forming a semi-circle round the stage, exposed to the sun and the showers; an arrangement which made rain less desirable for theatres in those days than now. When they could they acted in an inn yard, on which occasions the windows of the different stories made rows of boxes for the spectators. The theatre was thus more enclosed, and the audience a more paying one. Ursus was in everything—in the piece, in the company, in the kitchen, in the orchestra. Vinos beat the drum, and handled the sticks with great dexterity. Fibi played on the *morache*, a kind of guitar. The wolf had been promoted to be a utility gentleman, and played as occasion required, his little parts. Often when they appeared side by side on the stage, Ursus in his tightly-laced bear's skin Homo with his wolf's skin fitting still better, no one could tell which was the beast. This flattered Ursus.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ABSURDITIES WHICH FOLKS WITHOUT TASTE CALL POETRY.

THE pieces written by Ursus were interludes—a kind of composition out of fashion nowadays. One of these pieces, which has not come down to us, was entitled “Ursus Rursus.” It is probable that he played the principal part himself. A pretended exit, followed by a reappearance, was apparently its praiseworthy and sober subject. The titles of the interludes of Ursus were sometimes Latin, as we have seen, and the poetry frequently Spanish. The Spanish verses written by Ursus were rhymed, as was nearly all the Castilian poetry of that period. This did not puzzle the people. Spanish was then a familiar language; and the English sailors spoke Castilian even as the Roman sailors spoke Carthaginian (see Plautus). Moreover, at a theatrical representation, as at mass, Latin, or any other language unknown to the audience, is by no means a subject of care with them. They get out of the dilemma by adapting to the sounds familiar words. Our old Gaelic France was particularly prone

to this manner of being devout. At church, under cover of an *Immolatus*, the faithful chanted, “I will make merry;” and under a *sanctus*, “Kiss me, sweet.”

The Council of Trent was required to put an end to these familiarities.

Ursus had composed expressly for Gwynplaine an interlude, with which he was well pleased. It was his best work. He had thrown his whole soul into it. To give the sum of all one's talent in the production is the greatest triumph that any one can achieve. The toad which produces a toad achieves a grand success. You doubt it? Try, then, to do as much.

Ursus had carefully polished this interlude. This bear's cub was entitled “Chaos Vanquished.” Here it was: a night scene. When the curtain drew up, the crowd, massed around the Green Box, saw nothing but blackness. In this blackness three confused forms moved in the reptile state: a wolf, a bear, and a man. The wolf acted the wolf; Ursus, the bear; Gwynplaine, the man. The wolf and the bear represented the ferocious forces of Nature—unreasoning hunger and savage ignorance. Both rushed on Gwynplaine. It was chaos combating man. No face could be distinguished. Gwynplaine fought enfolded in a winding-sheet, and his face was covered by his thickly-falling locks. All else was shadow. The bear growled, the wolf knashed his teeth, the man cried out. The man was down; the beasts overwhelmed him. He cried for aid and succor; he hurled to the unknown an agonized appeal. He gave a death-rattle. To witness this agony of the prostrate man, now scarcely distinguishable from the brutes, was appalling. The crowd looked on breathless; in one minute more the wild beasts would triumph, and chaos reabsorb man. A struggle—cries—howlings; then, all at once, silence.

A song in the shadows. A breath had passed, and they heard a voice, Mysterious music floated, accompanying this chant of the invisible; and suddenly, none knowing whence or how, a white apparition arose. This apparition was a light; this light was a woman; this woman was a spirit. Dea—calm, fair, beautiful, formidable in her serenity and sweetness—appeared in the centre of a luminous mist. A profile of brightness in a dawn! She was a voice: a voice light, deep, indescribable. She sang in the new-born

light; she, invisible, made visible. They thought that they heard the hymn of an angel, or the song of a bird. At this apparition the man, starting up in his ecstasy, struck the beasts with his fists, and overthrew them.

Then the vision, gliding along in a manner difficult to understand, and therefore the more admired, sang these words in Spanish sufficiently pure for the English sailors who were present:—

“Ora ! llora !  
De palabra  
Nace razon.  
De luz el son.”\*

Then, looking down, as if she saw a gulf beneath, she went on,—

“Noche, quita te de alli !  
El alba canta hallali.”†

As she sang, the man raised himself by degrees; instead of lying he was now kneeling, his hands elevated towards the vision, his knees resting on the beasts, which lay motionless, and as if thunder-stricken.

She continued, turning towards him,—

“Es menester a cielos ir,  
Y tu que llorabas reir.”‡

And approaching him with the majesty of a star, she added,—

“Gebra barzon;  
Deja, monstroo,  
A tu negro  
Caparazon.”§

And she put her hand on his brow. Then another voice arose, deeper, and, consequently still sweeter—a voice broken and enwrapt with a gravity both tender and wild. It was the human chant responding to the chant of the stars. Gwynplaine, still in obscurity, his head under Dea's hand, and kneeling on the vanquished bear and wolf, sang,—

“O ven ! ama !  
Eres alma,  
Soy corazon.”||

And suddenly from the shadow a ray of light fell full upon Gwynplaine. Then, through the darkness, was the monster fully exposed.

\* Pray ! weep ! Reason is born of the word. Song creates light.

† Night, away ! the dawn sings hallali.

‡ Thou must go to heaven, and smile, thou that weapest.

§ Break the yoke; throw off, monster, thy dark clothing.

|| O, come, and love ! thou art soul, I am heart.

To describe the commotion of the crowd is impossible.

A sun of laughter rising, such was the effect. Laughter springs from unexpected causes, and nothing could be more unexpected than this termination. Never was sensation comparable to that produced by the ray of light striking on that mask, at once ludicrous and terrible. They laughed all around his laugh. Everywhere: above, below, behind, before, at the uttermost distance; men, women, old grey-heads, rosy-faced children; the good, the wicked, the gay, the sad, everybody. And even in the streets, the passers-by who could see nothing, hearing the laughter, laughed also. The laughter ended in clapping of hands and stamping of feet. The curtain dropped, Gwynplaine was recalled with frenzy. Hence an immense success. Have you seen “Chaos Vanquished?” Gwynplaine was run after. The listless came to laugh, the melancholy came to laugh, evil consciences came to laugh—a laugh so irresistible, that it seemed almost an epidemic. But there is a pestilence from which men do not fly, and that is the contagion of joy. The success, it must be admitted, did not rise higher than the populace. A great crowd means a crowd of nobodies. “Chaos Vanquished” could be seen for a penny. Fashionable people never go where the price of admission is a penny.

Ursus thought a good deal of his work, which he had brooded over for a long time. “It is in the style of one Shakespeare,” he said, modestly.

The juxtaposition of Dea, added to the indescribable effect produced by Gwynplaine. Her white face by the side of the gnome, represented what might have been called divine astonishment. The audience regarded Dea with a sort of mysterious anxiety. She had in her aspect the dignity of a virgin and of a priestess, not knowing man and knowing God. They saw that she was blind, and felt that she could see. She seemed to stand on the threshold of the supernatural. The light that beamed on her seemed half earthly and half heavenly. She had come to work on earth, and to work as heaven works, in the radiance of morning. Finding a hydra, she formed a soul. She seemed like a creative power, satisfied, but astonished at the result of her creation; and the audience fancied that they could see in the divine surprise

of that face desire of the cause, and wonder at the result. They felt that she loved this monster. Did she know that he was one? Yes; since she touched him. No; since she accepted him. This depth of night and this glory of day united, formed in the mind of the spectator a chiaroscuro in which appeared endless perspectives. How much divinity exists in the germ, in what manner the penetration of the soul into matter is accomplished, how the solar ray is an umbilical cord, how the disfigured is transfigured, how the deformed becomes heavenly, all these glimpses of mysteries added an almost cosmical emotion to the convulsive hilarity produced by Gwynplaine. Without going too deep, for spectators do not like the fatigue of seeking below the surface, something more was understood than was perceived. And this strange spectacle had the transparency of an avatar.

As to Dea, what she felt cannot be expressed by human words; she knew that she was in the midst of a crowd, and knew not what a crowd was. She heard a murmur, that was all. For her the crowd was but a breath. Generations are passing breaths. Man, respires, aspires, and expires. In that crowd Dea felt herself alone, and shuddering as one hanging over a precipice. Suddenly, in this trouble of innocence in distress, prompt to accuse the unknown, in her dread of a possible fall, Dea, serene notwithstanding, and superior to the vague agonies of peril, but inwardly shuddering at her isolation, found confidence and support. She had seized her thread of safety in the universe of shadows; she put her hand on the powerful head of Gwynplaine.

Joy unspeakable! she placed her rosy fingers on his forest of crisp hair. Wool when touched gives an impression of softness. Dea touched a lamb which she knew to be a lion. Her whole heart poured out an ineffable love. She felt out of danger, she had found her savior. The public believed that they saw the contrary. To the spectators the being loved was Gwynplaine, and the savior was Dea. What matters! thought Ursus, to whom the heart of Dea was visible. And Dea, reassured, consoled and delighted, adored the angel whilst the people contemplated the monster, and endured, fascinated herself as well, though in the opposite sense, that dread Promethean laugh.

True love is never weary. Being all soul

it cannot cool. A brazier comes to be full of cinders; not so a star. Her exquisite impressions were renewed every evening for Dea, and she was ready to weep with tenderness whilst the audience was in convulsions of laughter. Those around her were but joyful; she was happy.

The sensation of gayety due to the sudden shock caused by the rictus of Gwynplaine was evidently not intended by Ursus. He would have preferred more smiles and less laughter, and more of a literary triumph. But success consoles. He reconciled himself every evening to his excessive triumph, as he counted how many shillings the piles of farthings made, and how many pounds the piles of shillings, and besides, he said, after all, when the laugh had passed, "Chaos Vanquished" would be found in the depths of their minds, and something of it would remain there.

Perhaps he was not altogether wrong; the foundations of a work settle down in the mind of the public. The truth is, that this populace, attentive to the wolf, the bear, to the man, then to the music, to the howlings governed by harmony, to the night dissipated by dawn, to the chant releasing the light, accepted with a confused, dull sympathy, and with a certain emotional respect, the dramatic poem of "Chaos Vanquished," the victory of spirit over matter, ending with the joy of man.

Such were the vulgar pleasures of the people.

They sufficed them. The people had not the means of going to the noble matches of the gentry, and could not, like lords and gentlemen, bet a thousand guineas on Helms-gail against Phelem-ghe-madone.

## CHAPTER X.

### AN OUTSIDER'S VIEW OF MEN AND THINGS.

MAN has a notion of revenging himself on that which pleases him. Hence the contempt felt for the comedian.

This being charms me, diverts, distracts, teaches, enchants, consoles me, flings me into an ideal world, is agreeable and useful to me. What evil can I do him in return? Humiliate him. Disdain is a blow from afar. Let us strike the blow. He pleases me, therefore he is vile. He serves me, therefore

I hate him. Where can I find a stone to throw at him? Priest, give me yours. Philosopher, give me yours. Bossuet, excommunicate him. Rousseau, insult him. Orator, spit the pebbles from your mouth at him. Bear, fling your stone. Let us cast stones at the tree, hit the fruit and eat it. Bravo! and down with him! To repeat poetry is to be infected with the plague. Wretched play-actor, we will put him in the pillory for his success. Let him follow up his triumph with our hisses. Let him collect a crowd, and create a solitude. Thus it is that the wealthy, termed the higher classes, have invented for the actor that form of isolation, applause.

The crowd is less brutal. They neither hated nor despised Gwynplaine. Only the meanest caulker of the meanest crew of the meanest merchantman, anchored in the meanest English seaport, considered himself immeasurably superior to this amuser of the "scum," and believed that a caulker is as superior to an actor as a lord is to a caulker.

Gwynplaine was, therefore, like all comedians, applauded and kept at a distance. Truly, all success in this world is a crime, and must be expiated. He who obtains the medal has to take its reverse side as well.

For Gwynplaine there was no reverse. In this sense, both sides of his medal pleased him. He was satisfied with the applause, and content with the isolation. In Applause, he was rich. In Isolation, happy.

To be rich in his low estate means to be no longer wretchedly poor, to have neither holes in his clothes, nor cold at his hearth, nor emptiness in his stomach. It is to eat when hungry, and drink when thirsty. It is to have everything necessary, including a penny for a beggar. This indigent wealth, enough for liberty, was possessed by Gwynplaine. So far as his soul was concerned, he was opulent. He had love. What more could he want? Nothing.

You may think that had the offer been made to him to remove his deformity he would have grasped at it. Yet he would have refused it emphatically. What! to throw off his mask and have his former face restored, to be the creature he had perchance been created, handsome and charming! No, he would never have consented to it. For what would he have to support Dea? what would have become of the poor child, the sweet blind girl

who loved him? Without his rictus, which made him a clown without parallel, he would have been a mountebank, like any other; a common athlete, a picker up of pence from the chinks in the pavement, and Dea would perhaps not have had bread every day. It was with deep and tender pride that he felt himself the protector of the helpless and heavenly creature. Night, solitude, nakedness, weakness, ignorance, hunger, and thirst—seven yawning jaws of misery—were raised around her, and he was the St. George fighting the dragon. He triumphed over poverty. How? By his deformity. By his deformity he was useful, helpful, victorious, great. He had but to show himself, and money poured in. He was a master of crowds, the sovereign of the mob. He could do everything for Dea. Her wants he foresaw; her desires, her tastes, her fancies, in the limited sphere in which wishes are possible to the blind, he fulfilled. Gwynplaine and Dea were, as we have already shown, Providence to each other. He felt himself raised on her wings, she felt herself carried in his arms. To protect the being who loves you, to give what she requires to her who shines on you as your star, can anything be sweeter? Gwynplaine possessed this supreme happiness, and he owed it to his deformity. His deformity had raised him above all. By it he had gained the means of life for himself and others; by it he had gained independence, liberty, celebrity, internal satisfaction, and pride. In his deformity he was inaccessible. The Fates could do nothing beyond this blow in which they had spent their whole force, and which he had turned into a triumph. This lowest depth of misfortune had become the summit of Elysium. Gwynplaine was imprisoned in his deformity, but with Dea. And this was, as we have already said, to live in a dungeon of paradise. A wall stood between them and the living world. So much the better. This wall protected as well as enclosed them. What could affect Dea, what could affect Gwynplaine, with such a fortress around them? To take from him his success was impossible. They would have had to deprive him of his face. Take from him his love. Impossible! Dea could not see him. The blindness of Dea was divinely incurable. What harm did his deformity do Gwynplaine? None. What advantage did it give him? Every advantage. He was be-

loved, notwithstanding its horror, and perhaps for that very cause. Infirmary and deformity had by instinct been drawn towards and coupled with each other. To be beloved, is not that everything? Gwynplaine thought of his disfigurement only with gratitude. He was blessed in the stigma. With joy he felt that it was irremediable and eternal. What a blessing that it was so! While there were highways and fair-grounds, and journeys to take, the people below, and the sky above, they would be sure to live, Dea would want nothing, and they should have love. Gwynplaine would not have changed faces with Apollo. To be a monster was his form of happiness.

Thus, as we said before, destiny had given him all, even to overflowing. He who had been the rejected had been preferred.

He was so happy that he felt compassion for the men around him. He pitied the rest of the world. It was, besides, his instinct to look about him, because no one is always consistent, and a man's nature is not always theoretic; he was delighted to live within an enclosure, but from time to time he lifted his head above the wall. Then he retreated again with more joy into his loneliness with Dea, having drawn his comparison. What did he see around him?

What were those living creatures of which his wandering life showed him so many specimens, changed every day? Always new crowds, always the same multitude, ever new faces, ever the same miseries. A jumble of ruins. Every evening every phase of social misfortune came and circled his happiness.

The Green Box was popular.

Low prices attract the low classes. Those who came were the weak, the poor, the little. They rushed to Gwynplaine as they rushed to gin. They came to buy a pennyworth of forgetfulness. From the height of his platform Gwynplaine passed those wretched people in review. His spirit was enwrapped in the contemplation of every succeeding apparition of wide-spread misery. The physiognomy of man is modelled by conscience, and by the tenor of life, and is the result of a crowd of mysterious excavations. There was never a suffering, not an anger, not a shame, not a despair, of which Gwynplaine did not see the wrinkle. The mouths of those children had not eaten. That man was a father, that woman a mother, and behind

them, their families might be guessed to be on the road to ruin. There was a face already marked by vice, on the threshold of crime, and the reasons were plain; ignorance and indigence. Another showed the stamp of original goodness, obliterated by social pressure, and turned to hate. On the face of an old woman he saw starvation. On that of a girl, prostitution. The same fact, and although the girl had the resource of her youth all the sadder for that! In the crowd were arms without tools; the workers asked only, for work, but the work was wanting. Sometimes a soldier came and seated himself by the workmen, sometimes a wounded pensioner; and Gwynplaine saw the spectre of war. Here Gwynplaine read want of work, there man-farming slavery. On certain brows he saw an indescribable ebbing back towards animalism, and that slow return of man to beast, produced on those below by the dull pressure of the happiness of those above. There was a break in the gloom for Gwynplaine. He and Dea had a loophole of happiness; the rest was damnation. Gwynplaine felt above him the thoughtless trampling of the powerful, the rich, the magnificent the great, the elect of chance. Below he saw the pale faces of the disinherited. He saw himself and Dea, with their little happiness, so great to themselves, between two worlds. That which was above went and came, free, joyous, dancing, trampling under foot; above him the world which treads, below the world which is trodden upon. It is a fatal fact, and one indicating a profound social evil, that light should crush the shadow! Gwynplaine thoroughly grasped this dark evil. What! a destiny so reptile! Shall a man drag himself thus along with such adherence to dust and corruption, with such vicious tastes, such an abdication of right, or such abjectness that one feels inclined to crush him under foot? Of what butterfly is, then, this earthly life the grub?

What! in the crowd which hungers and which denies everywhere, and before all the questions of crime and shame (the inflexibility of the laws producing laxity of conscience), is there no child that grows but to be stunted, no virgin but matures for sin; no rose that blooms, but for the slime of the snail?

His eyes at times sought everywhere, with the curiosity of emotion, to probe the depths

of that darkness, in which there died away so many useless efforts, and in which there struggled so much weariness: families devoured by society, morals tortured by the laws, wounds gangrened by penalties, poverty gnawed by taxes, wrecked intelligence swallowed up by ignorance, rafts in distress alive with the famished, feuds, dearth, death-rattles, cries, disappearances. He felt the vague oppression of a keen, universal suffering. He saw the vision of the foaming waves of misery dashing over the crowd of humanity. He was safe in port himself, as he watched the wreck around him. Sometimes he laid his disfigured head in his hands and dreamed.

What folly to be happy! How one dreams! Ideas were born within him. Absurd notions crossed his brain.

Because formerly he had succored an infant, he felt a ridiculous desire to succor the whole world. The mists of reverie sometimes obscured his individuality, and he lost his ideas of proportion so far as to ask himself the question, "What can be done for the poor?" Sometimes he was so absorbed in his subject as to express it aloud. Then Ursus shrugged his shoulders and looked at him fixedly. Gwynplaine continued his reverie.

"Oh! were I powerful, would I not aid the wretched? But what am I?—An atom. What can I do?—Nothing."

He was mistaken. He was able to do a great deal for the wretched. He could make them laugh; and, as we have said, to make people laugh is to make them forget. What a benefactor on earth is he who can bestow forgetfulness!

## CHAPTER XI.

GWYNPLAINE THINKS JUSTICE, AND URSUS TALKS TRUTH.

— PHILOSOPHER is a spy. Ursus, a watcher of dreams, studied his pupil.

Our monologues leave on our brows a faint reflection, distinguishable to the eye of a physiognomist. Hence, what occurred to Gwynplaine did not escape Ursus. One day as Gwynplaine was meditating, Ursus pulled him by his jacket, and exclaimed,—

"You strike me as being an observer! You fool! Take care. It is no business of yours. You have one thing to do—to love Dea. You have two causes of happiness—the first

is, that the crowd sees your muzzle; the second is, that Dea does not. You have no right to the happiness you possess, for no woman who saw your mouth would consent to your kiss; and that mouth which has had your fortune, and that face, which has given you riches, is not your own. You were not born with that countenance. It was borrowed from the grimace which is at the bottom of the infinite. You have stolen your mask from the devil. You are hideous; be satisfied with having drawn that prize in the lottery. There are in this world (and a very good thing too) the happy by right, and the happy by luck. You are happy by luck. You are in a cave wherein a star is enclosed. The poor star belongs to you. Do not seek to leave the cave, and guard your star, O spider! You have in your web the carbuncle, Venus. Do me the favor to be satisfied. I see your dreams are troubled. It is idiotic of you. Listen, I am going to speak to you in the language of true poetry. Let Dea eat beefsteaks and mutton-chops, and in six months she will be as strong as a Turk; marry her immediately, give her a child, two children, three children, a long string of children. That is what I call philosophy. Moreover, it is happiness, which is no folly. To have children is a glimpse of heaven. Have brats—wipe them, blow their noses, dirt them, wash them, and put them to bed. Let them swarm about you. If they laugh, it is well; if they howl, it is better—to cry is to live. Watch them suck at six months, crawl at a year, walk at two, grow tall at fifteen, fall in love at twenty. He who has these joys has everything. For myself, I lacked the advantage; and that is the reason why I am a brute. God, a composer of beautiful poems and the first of men of letters, said to his fellow-workman, Moses: 'Increase and multiply.' Such is the text. Multiply you beast! As to the world, it is as it is; you cannot make nor mar it. Do not trouble yourself about it. Pay no attention to what goes on outside. Leave the horizon alone. A comedian is made to be looked at, not to look. Do you know what there is outside? The happy, by right. You, I repeat, are the happy by chance. You are the pickpocket of the happiness of which they are the proprietors. They are the legitimate possessors; you are the intruder. You live in concu-

binage with luck. What do you want that you have not already? Shibboleth help me! This fellow is a rascal. To multiply himself by Dea would be pleasant, all the same. Such happiness is like a swindle. Those above who possess happiness by privilege, do not like folks below them to have so much enjoyment. If they ask you what right you have to be happy, you will not know what to answer. You have no patent, and they have. Jupiter, Allah, Vishnou, Sabaoth, it does not matter who, has given them the passport to happiness. Fear them. Do not meddle with them, lest they should meddle with you. Wretch! do you know what the man is who is happy by right? He is a terrible being. He is a lord. A lord! He must have intrigued pretty well in the devil's unknown country before he was born, to enter life by the door he did. How difficult it must have been to him to be born! It is the only trouble he has given himself; but, just heaven, what a one!—to obtain from destiny, the blind blockhead, to mark him in his cradle a master of men. To bribe the box-keeper, to give him the best place at the show. Read the memoranda in the old hut, which I have placed on half-pay. Read that breviary of my wisdom, and you will see what it is to be a lord. A lord is one who has all, and is all. A lord is one who exists above his own nature. A lord is one who has when young the rights of an old man; when old, the success in intrigue of a young one; if vicious, the homage of respectable people; if a coward, the command of brave men; if a do-nothing, the fruits of labor; if ignorant, the diploma of Cambridge or Oxford; if a fool, the admiration of poets; if ugly, the smiles of women; if a Thersites, the helm of Achilles; if a hare, the skin of a lion. Do not misunderstand my words. I do not say that a lord must necessarily be ignorant, a coward, ugly, stupid, or old. I only mean that he may be all those things without any detriment to himself. On the contrary. Lords are princes. The king of England is only a lord, the first peer of the peerage; that is all, but it is much. Kings were formerly called lords—the lord of Denmark, the lord of Ireland, the lord of the Isles. The Lord of Norway was first called king three hundred years ago. Lucius, the most ancient king in England, was spoken to by Saint Telephorus as my Lord Lucius. The lords are peers—

that is to say, equals—of whom?—Of the king. I do not commit the mistake of confounding the lords with parliament. The assembly of the people which the Saxons before the Conquest called *wittenagemote*, the Normons, after the Conquest, entitled *parliamentum*. By degrees the people were turned out. The king's letters clause convoking the Commons, addressed formerly *ad concilium impendendum*, are now addressed *ad consentiendum*. To say Yes is their liberty. The peers can say No; and the proof is that they have said it. The peers can cut off the king's head. The people cannot. The stroke of the hatchet which decapitated Charles I. is an encroachment, not on the king, but on the peers, and it was well to place on the gibbet the carcase of Cromwell. The lords have power. Why? Because they have riches. Who has turned over the leaves of the Doomsday-book? It is the proof that the lords possess England. It is the registry of the estates of subjects, compiled under William the Conqueror; and it is in the charge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. To copy anything in it, you have to pay twopence a line. It is a proud book. Do you know that I was domestic doctor to a lord, who was called Marmaduke, and who had thirty-six thousand a year? Think of that, you hideous idiot! Do you know that, with rabbits only from the warrens of Earl Lindsay, they could feed all the riff-raff of the Cinque Ports? And the good order kept! Every poacher is hung. For two long, furry ears, sticking out of a game-bag, I saw the father of six children hanging on the gibbet. Such is the peerage. The rabbit of a great lord is of more importance than God's image in a man.

"Lords exist, your trespasser, do you see? and we must think it good that they do; and even if we do not, what harm will it do them? The people object, indeed! Why? Plautus himself would never have attained the comicality of such an idea. A philosopher would be jesting if he advised the poor devil of the masses to cry out against the size and weight of the lords. Just as well might the gnat dispute with the foot of an elephant. One day I saw a hippopotamus tread upon a mole-hill; he crushed it utterly. He was innocent. The great soft-headed fool of a mastodon did not even know of the existence of moles. My son, the moles that are trodden



on are the human race. To crush is a law. And do you think that the mole himself crushes nothing? Why, it is the mastodon of the fleshworm, who is the mastodon of the globeworm. But let us cease arguing. My boy, there are coaches in the world; my lord is inside, the people under the wheels; the philosopher gets out of the way. Stand aside and let them pass. As to myself, I love lords, and shun them. I lived with one; the beauty of my recollection suffices me. I remember his country house, like a glory in a cloud. My dreams are all retrospective. Nothing could be more admirable than the Marmaduke Lodge in grandeur, beautiful symmetry, rich avenues, and the ornaments and surroundings of the edifice. The houses, country seats, and palaces of the lords present a selection of all that is greatest and most magnificent in this flourishing kingdom. I love our Lords. I thank them for being opulent, powerful, and prosperous. I myself am clothed in shadow, and I look with interest upon the shred of heavenly blue which is called a lord. You enter Marmaduke Lodge by an exceedingly spacious courtyard, which forms an oblong square, divided into eight spaces, each surrounded by a balustrade; on each side is a wide approach, and a superb hexagonal fountain plays in the midst; this fountain is formed of two basins, which are surmounted by a dome of exquisite openwork, elevated on six columns. It was there that I knew a learned Frenchman, Monsieur l'Abbe du Cros, who belonged to the Jacobin monastery, in the Rue Saint Jacques. Half the library of Erpenius is at Marmaduke Lodge, the other half being at the theological gallery at Cambridge. I used to read the books, seated under the ornamented portal. These things are shown only to a select number of curious travellers. Do you know, you ridiculous boy, that William North, who is Lord Grey of Rolleston, and sits fourteenth on the bench of Barons, has more forest trees on his mountains than you have hairs on your horrible noodle? Do you know that Lord Norreys of Rycotte, who is Earl of Abingdon, has a square keep a hundred feet high, having this device—*Virtus arcte fortior*; which you would think meant that virtue is stronger than a ram, but which really means, you idiot, that courage is stronger than a battering-machine. Yes, I honor, accept, respect, and revere our lords. It is the lords, who,

with her royal majesty, work to procure and preserve the advantages of the nation. Their consummate wisdom shines in intricate junctures. Their precedence over others I wish they had not; but they have it. What is called principality in Germany, grandeeship in Spain, is called peerage in England and France. There being a fair show of reason for considering the world a wretched place enough, heaven felt where the burden was most galling, and to prove that it knew how to make happy people, created lords for the satisfaction of philosophers. This acts as a set-off, and gets heaven out of the scrape, affording it a decent escape from a false position. The great are great. A peer, speaking of himself, says *we*. A peer is plural. The king qualifies the peer *consanguinei nostri*. The peers have made a multitude of wise laws; amongst others, one which condemns to death any one who cuts down a three-year-old poplar tree. This supremacy is such that they have a language of their own. In heraldic style, black, which is called sable for gentry, is called saturne for princes, and diamond for peers. Diamond dust, a night thick with stars, such is the night of the happy! Even amongst themselves these high and mighty lords have their own distinctions. A barron cannot wash with a viscount, without his permission. These are indeed excellent things, and safeguards to the nation.

What a fine thing it is for the people, to have twenty-five dukes, five marquises, seventy-six earls, nine viscounts, and sixty-one barons; making altogether a hundred and seventy-six peers, of which some are your grace, and some my lord. What matter a few rags here and there, withal; everybody cannot be dressed in gold. Let the rags be. Cannot you see the purple! One balances the other. A thing must be built of something. Yes, of course, there are the poor—what of them! They line the happiness of the wealthy. Devil take it! our lords are our glory! The pack of hounds belonging to Charles, Baron Mohun, costs him as much as the hospital for lepers in Moorgate, and for Christ's Hospital, founded for children, in 1553, by Edward VI. Thomas Osborne, Duke of Leeds, spends yearly on his liveries five thousand golden guineas. The Spanish grandees have a guardian appointed by law to prevent their ruin-

ing themselves. That is cowardly. Our lords are extravagant and magnificent. I esteem them for it. Let us not abuse them like envious folks. I feel happy when a beautiful vision passes. I have not the light, but I have the reflection. A reflection thrown on my ulcer, you will say. Go to the devil! I am a Job, delighted in the contemplation of Trimalcion. Oh, that beautiful and radiant planet up there! But the moonlight is something. To suppress the lords was an idea which Orestes, mad as he was, would not have dared to entertain. To say that the lords are mischievous or useless, is as much as to say that the state should be revolutionized, and that men are not made to live like cattle, browsing the grass and bitten by the dog. The field is shorn by the sheep, the sheep by the shepherd. It is all one to me. I am a philosopher, and I care about life as much as a fly. Life is but a lodging. When I think that Henry Bowes Howard, Earl of Berkshire, has in his stable twenty-four state carriages, of which one is mounted in silver and another in gold,—good heavens! I know that every one has not got twenty-four state carriages; but there is no need to complain for all that. Because you were cold one night, what was that to him? It concerns you only. Others besides you suffer cold and hunger. Don't you know that without that cold, Dea would not have been blind, and if Dea were not blind she would not love you? Think of that, you fool! And, besides, if all the people who are lost, were to complain, there would be a pretty tumult! Silence is the rule. I have no doubt that heaven imposes silence on the damned, otherwise heaven itself would be punished by their everlasting cry. The happiness of Olympus is bought by the silence of Cocytus. Then, people! be silent! I do better myself; I approve and admire. Just now I was enumerating the lords, and I ought to add to the list two archbishops and twenty-four bishops. Truly, I am quite effected when I think of it! I remember to have seen at the tithe-gathering of the Rev. Dean of Raphoe, who combined the peerage with the church, a great tithe of beautiful wheat taken from the peasants in the neighborhood, and which the dean had not been at the trouble of growing. This left him time to say his prayers. Do you know that Lord Marmaduke, my master, was

Lord Grand Treasurer of Ireland, and High Seneschal of the sovereignty of Knaresborough in the county of York? Do you know that the Lord High Chamberlain, which is an office hereditary in the family of the Dukes of Ancaster, dresses the king for his coronation, and receives for his trouble forty yards of crimson velvet, besides the bed on which the king has slept; and that the Usher of the Black Rod is his deputy? I should like to see you deny this, that the senior viscount of England is Robert Brent, created a viscount by Henry V. The lords' titles imply sovereignty over land, except that of Earl Rivers, who takes his title from his family name. How admirable is the right which they have to tax others, and to levy, for instance, four shillings in the pound sterling income-tax, which has just been continued for another year. And all the fine taxes on distilled spirits, on the excise of wine and beer, on tonnage and poundage, on cider, on perry, on mum, malt, and prepared barley, on coals, and on a hundred things besides. Let us venerate things as they are. The clergy themselves depend on the lords. The Bishop of Man is subject to the Earl of Derby. The lords have wild beasts of their own, which they place in their armorial bearings. God not having made enough, they have invented others. They have created the heraldic wild boar, who is as much above the wild boar as the wild boar is above the domestic pig, and the lord is above the priest. They have created the griffin, which is an eagle to lions, and a lion to eagles, terrifying lions by his wings, and eagles by his mane. They have the guivre, the unicorn, the serpent, the salamander, the tarask, the drie, the dragon, and the hippogriff. All these things, terrible to us, are to them but an ornament and an embellishment. They have a menagerie which they call the blazon, in which unknown beasts roar. The prodigies of the forest are nothing compared to the inventions of their pride. Their vanity is full of phantoms which move as in a sublime night, armed with helm and cuirass, spurs on their heels and the sceptres in their hands, saying in a grave voice, 'We are the ancestors!' The canker-worms eat the roots, and the panoplies eat the people. Why not? Are we to change the laws? The peerage is part of the order of society. Do you know that there is a duke in Scotland who can ride

ninety miles without leaving his own estate? Do you know that the Archbishop of Canterbury has a revenue of 40,000*l.* a year? Do you know that her majesty has 700,000*l.* sterling from the civil list, besides castles, forests, domains, fiefs, tenancies, freeholds prebendaries, tithes, rent, confiscations, and fines, which bring in over a million sterling? Those who are not satisfied, are hard to please?"

"Yes," murmured Gwynplaine, sadly; "the paradise of the rich is made out of the hell of the poor."

## CHAPTER XII.

### URSUS THE POET DRAGS ON URSUS THE PHILOSOPHER.

THEN Dea entered. He looked at her, and saw nothing but her. This is love; one may be carried away for a moment by the importunity of some other idea, but the beloved one enters, and all that does not appertain to her presence immediately fades away, without her dreaming that perhaps she is effacing in us a world.

Let us mention a circumstance. In "Chaos Vanquished," the word, *monstruo*, addressed to Gwynplaine, displeased Dea. Sometimes, with the smattering of Spanish, which everyone knew at the period, she took it into her head to replace it by *quiero*, which signifies, I wish it. Ursus tolerated, although not without an expression of impatience, this alteration in his text. He might have said to Dea, as in our day, Moessard said to Vissot, *Tu manques de respect au répertoire*.

"The Laughing Man."

Such was the form of Gwynplaine's fame. His name, Gwynplaine, little known at any time, had disappeared under his nickname, as his face had disappeared under its grin.

His popularity was like his visage—a mask.

His name, however, was to be read on a large placard in front of the Green Box, which offered the crowd the following narrative composed by Ursus:—

"Here is to be seen Gwynplaine, who was deserted at the age of ten, on the night of the 29th of January, 1690, by the villanous Comprachicos, on the coast of Portland. The little boy has grown up, and is called now,—

THE LAUGHING MAN."

The existence of these mountebanks was as an existence of lepers in a leper-house, and of the blessed in one of the Pleiades. There was every day a sudden transition from the noisy exhibition outside, into the most complete seclusion. Every evening they made their exit from this world. They were like the dead, vanishing on condition of being reborn next day. A comedian is a revolving light, appearing one moment, disappearing the next, and existing for the public but as a phantom or a light, as his life circles round. To exhibition succeeded isolation. When the performance was finished, whilst the audience was dispersing, and their murmur of satisfaction was dying away in the streets, the Green Box shut up its platform, as a fortress does its drawbridge, and all communication with mankind was cut off. On one side, the universe; on the other, the caravan; and this caravan contained liberty, clear consciences, courage, devotion, innocence, happiness, love—all the constellations.

Blindness having sight and deformity beloved, sat side by side,—hand pressing hand, brow touching brow, and whispered to each other, intoxicated with love.

The compartment in the middle served two purposes—for the public it was a stage, for the actors a dining-room.

Ursus, even delighting in comparisons, profited by the diversity of its uses to liken the central compartment in the Green Box to the arradach in an Abyssinian hut.

Ursus counted the receipts, then they supped. In love all is ideal. In love, eating and drinking together afford opportunities for many sweet promiscuous touches, by which a mouthful becomes a kiss. They drank ale or wine from the same glass, as they might drink dew out of the same lily. Two souls in love are as full of grace as two birds. Gwynplaine waited on Dea, cut her bread, poured out her drink, approached her too close.

"Hum!" cried Ursus, and he turned away, his scolding melting into a smile.

The wolf supped under the table, heedless of everything which did actually not concern his bone.

Fibi and Vinos shared the repast, but gave little trouble. These vagabonds, half wild and uncouth as ever, spoke in the gypsy language to each other.

At length Dea re-entered the women's

apartment with Fibi and Vinos. Ursus chained up Homo under the Green Box; Gwynplaine looked after the horses, the lover becoming a groom, like a hero of Homer's or a paladin of Charlemagne's. At midnight all were asleep, except the wolf, who, alive to his responsibility, now and then opened an eye. The next morning, they met again. They breakfasted together, generally on ham and tea. Tea was introduced into England in 1698. Then Dea, after the Spanish fashion, took a siesta, acting on the advice of Ursus, who considered her delicate, and slept some hours, while Gwynplaine and Ursus did all the little jobs of work, without and within, which their wandering life made necessary. Gwynplaine rarely wandered away from the Green Box, except on unfrequented roads and in solitary places. In cities he went out only at night, disguised in a large slouched hat, so as not to exhibit his face in the street.

His face was to be seen uncovered only on the stage.

The Green Box had frequented cities but little. Gwynplaine at twenty-four had never seen towns larger than the Cinque Ports. His renown, however, was increasing. It began to rise above the populace, and to percolate through higher ground. Amongst those who were fond of, and ran after, strange foreign curiosities and prodigies, it was known that there was somewhere in existence, leading a wandering life, now here, now there, an extraordinary monster. They talked about him, they sought him, they asked where he was. The laughing man was becoming decidedly famous. A certain lustre was reflected on "Chaos Vanquished."

So much so, that, one day, Ursus, being ambitious, said,—

"We must go to London."

## BOOK THE THIRD.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE FISSURE.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE TADCASTER INN.

AT that period London had but one bridge—London-bridge, with houses built upon it. This bridge united London to Southwark, a suburb which was paved with flint pebbles taken from the Thames, divided into small

streets and alleys, like the city, with a great number of buildings, houses, dwellings, and wooden huts jammed together, a pell-mell mixture of combustible matter, amidst which fire might take its pleasure, as 1666 had proved. Southwark was then pronounced Soudric, it is now pronounced Sousouore, or near it; indeed, an excellent way of pronouncing English names, is not to pronounce them. Thus, for Southampton, say, Stpntn.

It was the time when "Chatham" was pronounced *je t'aime*.

The Southwark of those days resembles the Southwark of to-day about as much as Vaugirard resembles Marseilles. It was a village—it is a city. Nevertheless, a considerable trade was carried on there. The long Cyclopean wall by the Thames was studded with rings, to which were anchored the river barges.

This wall was called the Effroc Wall, or Effroc Stone. York, in Saxon times, was called Effroc. The legend related that a Duke of Effroc had been drowned at the foot of the wall. Certainly the water there was deep enough to drown a duke. At low water it was six good fathoms. The excellence of this little anchorage attracted sea vessels, and the old Dutch tub, called the Vograat, came to anchor at the Effroc Stone. The Vograat made the crossing from London to Rotterdam, and from Rotterdam to London, punctually once a week. Other barges started twice a day, either for Deptford, Greenwich, or Gravesend, going down with one tide and returning with the next. The voyage to Gravesend, though twenty miles, was performed in six hours.

The Vograat was of a model now no longer to be seen, except in naval museums. It was almost a junk. At that time, while France copied Greece, Holland copied China. The Vograat, a heavy hull with two masts, was partitioned perpendicularly, so as to be watertight, having a narrow hold in the middle, and two decks, one fore and the other aft. The decks were flush as in the iron turret-vessels of the present day, the advantage of which is that in foul weather, the force of the wave is diminished, and the inconvenience of which is that the crew is exposed to the action of the sea, owing to there being no bulwarks. There was nothing to save any one on board from falling over. Hence the frequent falls overboard and the losses of men,

which have caused the model to fall into disuse. The Vograat went to Holland direct, and did not even call at Gravesend.

An old ridge of stones, rock<sup>s</sup> as much as masonry, ran along the bottom of the Effroc Stone, and being passable at all tides, was used as a passage on board the ships moored to the wall. This wall was, at intervals, furnished with steps. It marked the southern point of Southwark. An embankment at the top allowed the passers-by to rest their elbows on the Effroc Stone, as on the parapet of a quay. Thence they could look down on the Thames; on the other side of the water London dwindled away into the fields.

Up the river from the Effroc Stone, at the bend of the Thames which is nearly opposite St. James's Palace, behind Lambeth House, not far from the walk then called Foxhall (Vauxhall, probably), there was, between a pottery in which they made porcelain, and a glass-blower's, where they made ornamental bottles, one of those large unenclosed spaces covered with grass, called formerly in France *cultures* and *mails*, and in England bowling-greens. Of bowling-green, a green on which to roll a ball, the French have made *boulingrin*. Folks have this green inside their houses now-a-days, only it is put on the table, is a cloth instead of turf, and is called billiards.

It is difficult to see why, having boulevard (*boule-vert*), which is the same word as bowling-green, the French should have adopted *boulingrin*. It is surprising that a person so grave as the Dictionary should indulge in useless luxuries.

The bowling-green of Southwark was called Tarrinzeau Field, because it had belonged to the Barons Hastings, who are also Barons Tarrinzeau and Mauchline. From the Lords Hastings the Tarrinzeau Field passed to the Lords Tadcaster, who had made a speculation of it, just as, at a later date, a Duke of Orleans made a speculation of the Palais Royal. Tarrinzeau Field afterwards became waste ground and parochial property.

Tarrinzeau Field was a kind of permanent fair ground, covered with jugglers, athletes, mountebanks, and music on platforms; and always full of "fools going to look at the devil," as Archbishop Sharpe said. To look at the devil means to go the play.

Several inns, which harbored the public and sent them to these outlandish exhibitions, were established in this place, which kept

holiday all the year round, and thereby prospered. These inns were simply stalls, inhabited only during the day. In the evening the tavern keeper put into his pocket the key of the tavern and went away.

One only of these inns was a house, the only dwelling in the whole bowling-green, the caravans of the fair ground having the power of disappearing at any moment, considering the absence of any ties in the vagabond life of all mountebanks.

Mountebanks have no roots to their lives.

This inn, called the Tadcaster, after the former owners of the ground, was an inn rather than a tavern, an hotel rather than an inn, and had a carriage entrance, and a large yard.

The carriage entrance, opening from the court on the field, was the legitimate door of the Tadcaster Inn, which had, beside it, a small bastard door, by which people entered. To call it bastard, is to mean preferred. This lower door was the only one used. It opened into the tavern, properly so called, which was a large taproom, full of tobacco smoke, furnished with tables, and low in the ceiling. Over it was a window on the first floor, to the iron bars to which was fastened and hung the sign of the inn. The principal door was barred and bolted, and always remained closed.

It was thus necessary to cross the tavern to enter the court-yard.

At the Tadcaster Inn there was a landlord and a boy. The landlord was called Master Nicless, the boy Govicum. Master Nicless—Nicholas, doubtless, which the English habit of contraction had made Nicless, was a miserly widower, and one who respected and feared the laws. As to his appearance, he had bushy eyebrows and hairy hands. The boy, aged fourteen, who poured out drink, and answered to the name of Govicum, wore a merry face, and an apron. His hair was cropped close, a sign of servitude.

He slept on the ground floor, in a nook in which they formerly kept a dog. This nook had for window a bull's eye looking on the bowling-green.

## CHAPTER II.

### OPEN-AIR ELOQUENCE.

ONE very cold and windy evening, on which there was every reason why folks should

hasten on their way along the street, a man, who was walking in Tarrinzeau Field close under the walls of the tavern, stopped suddenly. It was during the last months of winter between 1704 and 1705. This man, whose dress indicated a sailor, was of good mien and fine figure, things imperative to courtiers, and not forbidden to common folk.

Why did he stop? To listen. What to? To a voice apparently speaking in the court on the other side of the wall, a voice a little weakened by age, but so powerful, notwithstanding, that it reached the passer-by in the street. At the same time might be heard in the enclosure, from which the voice came, the hubbub of a crowd.

This voice said,—

“Men and women of London, here I am! I cordially wish you joy of being English. You are a great people. I say more: you are a great populace. Your fisticuffs are even better than your sword thrusts. You have an appetite. You are the nation which eats other nations—a magnificent function! This suction of the world makes England pre-eminent. As politicians and philosophers, in the management of colonies, populations, and industry, and in the desire to do others any harm which may turn to your own good, you stand alone. The hour will come when two boards will be put up on earth—inscribed on one side, Men; on the other, Englishmen. I mention this to your glory, I, who am neither English nor human, having the honor to be a bear. Still more—I am a doctor. That follows. Gentlemen, I teach. What? Two kinds of things—things which I know, and things which I do not. I sell my drugs and I sell my ideas. Approach and listen. Science invites you. Open your ear; if it is small, it will hold but little truth; if large, a great deal of folly will find its way in. Now, then, attention! I teach the *Pseudoxia Epidemica*. I have a comrade who will make you laugh, but I can make you think. We live in the same box, laughter being of quite as old a family as thought. When people asked Democritus, ‘How do you know?’ he answered, ‘I laugh.’ And if I am asked, ‘Why do you laugh?’ I shall answer, ‘I know.’ However, I am not laughing. I am the rectifier of popular errors. I take upon myself the task of cleaning your intellects. They require it. Heaven permits people to deceive themselves, and to be deceived. It is useless to be absurdly modest. I

frankly avow that I believe in Providence, even where it is wrong. Only when I see filth—errors are filth—I sweep them away. How am I sure of what I know? That concerns only myself. Everyone catches wisdom as he can. Lactantius asked questions of, and received answers from, a bronze head of Virgil. Sylvester II. conversed with birds. Did the birds speak? Did the Pope twitter? That is a question. The dead child of the Rabbi Eleazer talked to St. Augustin. Between ourselves, I doubt all these facts except the last. The dead child might perhaps talk, because under its tongue it had a gold plate, on which were engraved divers constellations. Thus he deceived people. The fact explains itself. You see my moderation. I separate the true from the false. See! here are other errors in which, no doubt, you partake, poor ignorant folks that you are, and from which I wish to free you. Dioscorides believed that there was a god in the henbane; Chrysippus in the cynopaste; Josephus in the root bauras; Homer in the plant moly. They were all wrong. The spirits in herbs are not gods but devils. I have tested this fact. It is not true that the serpent which tempted Eve had a human face, as Cadmus relates. Garcias de Horto, Cadamosto, and John Hugo, Archbishop of Trèves, deny that it is sufficient to saw down a tree to catch an elephant. I incline to their opinion. Citizens, the efforts of Lucifer are the cause of all false impressions. Under the reign of such a prince, it is natural that meteors of error and of perdition should arise. My friends, Claudius Pulcher did not die because the fowls refused to come out of the fowl house. The fact is, that Lucifer, having foreseen the death of Claudius Pulcher, took care to prevent the birds feeding. Then Belzebub gave the Emperor Vespasian the virtue of curing the lame and giving sight to the blind, by his touch, was act praiseworthy in itself, but of which the motive was culpable. Gentlemen, distrust those false doctors, who sell the root of the briony and the white snake, and who make washes with honey and the blood of a cock. See clearly through that which is false. It is not quite true that Orion was the result of a natural function of Jupiter. The truth is that it was Mercury who produced this star in that way. It is not true that Adam had a navel. When St. George killed the dragon he had not the daughter of a saint standing by his

side. St. Jerome had not a clock on the chimney-piece of his study; first because living in a cave, he had no study; secondly, because he had no chimney-piece; thirdly, because clocks were not yet invented. Let us put these things right. Put them right. O gentlefolks, who listen to me, if anyone tells you that a lizard will be born in your head if you smell the herb valerian,—that the rotting carcase of the ox changes into bees, and that of the horse into hornets,—that a man weighs more when dead than when alive,—that the blood of the he-goat dissolves emeralds,—that a caterpillar, a fly and a spider, seen on the same tree, announces famine, war and pestilence,—that the falling sickness is to be cured by a worm found in the head of a buck, do not believe him. These things are errors. But now listen to truths. The skin of a sea-calf is a safeguard against thunder. The toad feeds upon earth, which causes a stone to come into his head. The rose of Jericho blooms on Christmas eve. Serpents cannot endure the shadow of the ash-tree. The elephant has no joints, and sleeps resting upright against a tree. Make a toad sit upon a cock's egg, and he will hatch a scorpion which will become a salamander. A blind person will recover sight by putting one hand on the left side on the altar and the other on his eyes. Virginity does not hinder maternity. Honest people lay these truths to heart. Above all, you can believe in Providence in either of two ways, either as thirst believes in the orange, or as the ass believes in the whip. Now I am going to introduce you to my family."

Here a violent gust of wind shook the window frames and shutters of the inn, which stood detached. It was like a prolonged murmur of the sky. The orator paused a moment, and then resumed.

"An interruption; very good. Speak north wind. Gentlemen, I am not angry. The wind is loquacious, like all solitary creatures. There is no one to keep him company up here, so he jabbbers. I resume the thread of my discourse. Here you see associated artists. We are four—a *lupo principium*. I begin by my friend, who is a wolf. He does not conceal it. See him! He is educated, grave and sagacious. Providence, perhaps, entertained for a moment the idea of making him a doctor of the university; but for that one must be rather stupid, and

that he is not. I may add that he has no prejudices, and is not aristocratic. He chats sometimes with bitches; he who, by right, should consort only with she-wolves. His heirs, if he have any, will no doubt gracefully combine the yap of their mother with the howl of their father. Because he does howl.

He howls in sympathy with men. He barks as well, in condescension to civilization—a magnanimous concession. Homo is a dog made perfect. Let us venerate the dog.

The dog—curious animal! sweats with his tongue and smiles with his tail. Gentlemen, Homo equals in wisdom, and surpasses in cordiality, the hairless wolf of Mexico, the wonderful xoloitzeniski. I may add that he is humble. He has the modesty of the wolf who is useful to men. He is helpful and charitable, and says nothing about it. His left paw knows not the good which his right paw does. These are his merits. Of the other, my second friend, I have but one word to say. He is a monster. You will admire him. He was formerly abandoned by pirates on the shores of the wild ocean. This third one is blind. Is she an exception? No, we are all blind. The miser is blind; he sees gold and he does not see riches. The prodigal is blind; he sees the beginning, and does not see the end. The coquette is blind; she does not see her wrinkles. The learned man is blind; he does not see his own ignorance. The honest man is blind; he does not see the thief. The thief is blind; he does not see God. God is blind, the day that he created the world, he did not see the devil manage to creep into it. I myself am blind; I speak and do not see that you are deaf. This blind girl who accompanies us is a mysterious priestess. Vesta has confided to her her torch. She has in her character depths as soft as a division in the wool of a sheep. I believe her to be a king's daughter, though I do not assert it as a fact. A laudable distrust is the attribute of wisdom. For my own part, I reason and I doctor, I think and I heal. *Chirurgus sum*. I cure fevers, miasmas, and plagues. Almost all our melancholy and sufferings are issues, which if carefully treated relieve us quietly from other evils which might be worse. All the same, I do not recommend you to have an anuthrax, otherwise called carbuncle. It is a stupid malady, and serves no good end. One dies of it—that is all. I am

neither uncultivated nor rustic. I honor eloquence and poetry, and live in an innocent union with these goddesses. I conclude by a piece of advice. Ladies and gentlemen,—on the sunny side of your dispositions, cultivate virtue, modesty, honesty, probity, justice and love. Each one here below may thus have his little pot of flowers on his window-sill. My lords and gentlemen, I have spoken. The play is about to begin.”

The man who was apparently a sailor, and who had been listening outside, entered the lower room of the inn, crossed it, paid the necessary entrance money, reached the courtyard, which was full of people, saw at the bottom of it a caravan on wheels, wide open, and on the platform an old man dressed in a bearskin, a young man looking like a mask, a blind girl, and a wolf.

“Gracious heaven!” he cried, “what delightful people!”

### CHAPTER III.

#### WHERE THE PASSER-BY REAPPEARS.

THE Green Box, as we have just seen, had arrived in London. It was established at Southwark. Ursus had been tempted by the bowling-green, which had one great recommendation, that it was always fair-day there, even in winter.

The dome of St. Paul’s was a delight to Ursus.

London, take it all in all, has some good in it. It was a brave thing to dedicate a cathedral to St. Paul. The real cathedral saint is St. Peter. St. Paul is suspected of imagination, and in matters ecclesiastical imagination means heresy. St. Paul is a saint only with extenuating circumstances. He entered heaven only by the artist’s door.

A cathedral is a sign. St. Peter is the sign of Rome, the city of the dogma; St. Paul that of London, the city of schism.

Ursus, whose philosophy had arms so long that it embraced everything, was a man who appreciated these shades of difference, and his attraction towards London arose, perhaps, from a certain taste of his for St. Paul.

The yard of the Tadcaster Inn had taken the fancy of Ursus. It might have been ordered for the Green Box. It was a theatre ready-made. It was square, with three sides built round, and a wall forming the fourth.

Against this wall was placed the Green Box, which they were able to draw into the yard, owing to the height of the gate. A large wooden balcony, roofed over, and supported on posts, on which the rooms of the first story opened, ran round the three fronts of the interior façade of the house, making two right angles. The windows of the ground floor made boxes, the pavement of the court the pit, and the balcony the gallery. The Green Box, reared against the wall, was thus in front of a theatre. It was very like the Globe, where they played “Othello,” “King Lear,” and “The Tempest.”

In a corner behind the Green Box was a stable.

Ursus had made his arrangements with the tavern-keeper, Master Nicless, who, owing to his respect for the law, would not admit the wolf without charging him extra.

The placard, “Gwynplaine, the Laughing Man,” taken from its nail in the Green Box, was hung up close to the sign of the inn. The sitting-room of the tavern had, as we have seen, an inside door which opened into the court. By the side of the door was constructed off-hand, by means of an empty barrel, a box for the money-taker, who was sometimes Fibi, and sometimes Vinos. This was managed much as at present. Pay and pass in. Under the placard announcing the Laughing Man was a piece of wood, painted white, hung on two nails, on which was written in charcoal in large letters the title of Ursus’ grand piece, “Chaos Vanquished.”

In the centre of the balcony, precisely opposite the Green Box, and in a compartment having for entrance a window reaching to the ground, there had been partitioned off a space “for the nobility.” It was large enough to hold, in two rows, ten spectators.

“We are in London,” said Ursus. “We must be prepared for the gentry.”

He had furnished this box with the best chairs in the inn, and had placed in the centre, a grand arm-chair of yellow Utrecht velvet, with a cherry-colored pattern, in case some alderman’s wife should come. They began their performances. The crowd immediately flocked to them, but the compartment for the nobility remained empty. With that exception their success became so great, that no mountebank memory could recall its parallel. All Southwark ran in crowds to admire the Laughing Man.



The merry-andrews and mountebanks of Tarrinzeau Field were aghast at Gwynplaine. The effect he caused was as that of a spar-rowhawk flapping his wings in a cage of gold-finches, and feeding in their seed-trough. Gwynplaine ate up their public.

Besides the small fry, the swallows of swords, and the grimace makers, real performances took place on the green. There was a circus of women, ringing from morning till night with a magnificent peal of all sorts of instruments,—psalteries, drums, rebecks, micamons, timbrels, reeds, dulcimers, gongs, chevrettes, bagpipes, German horns, English eschaqueils, pipes, flutes, and flageolets.

In a large round tent were some tumblers, who could not have equalled our present climbers of the Pyrenees—Dulma, Bordenave, and Meylonga—who from the peak of Perrefitte descend to the plateau of Limaçon, an almost perpendicular height. There was a traveling menagerie, where was to be seen a performing tiger, who, lashed by the keeper, snapped at the whip and tried to swallow the lash. Even this comedian of jaws and claws was eclipsed in success.

Curiosity, applause, receipts, crowds, the Laughing Man monopolized everything. It happened in the twinkling of an eye. Nothing was thought of but the Green Box.

“ ‘Chaos Vanquished’ is ‘Chaos Victor,’ ” said Ursus, appropriating half Gwynplaine’s success, and taking the wind out of his sails, as they say at sea. That success was prodigious. Still it remained local. Fame does not cross the sea easily. It took a hundred and thirty years for the name of Shakspeare to penetrate from England into France. The sea is a wall; and if Voltaire—a thing which he very much regretted when it was too late—had not thrown a bridge over to Shakspeare, Shakspeare might still be in England, on the other side of the wall, a captive in insular glory.

The glory of Gwynplaine had not passed London Bridge. It was not great enough yet to re-echo throughout the city. At least not at first. But Southwark ought to have sufficed to satisfy the ambition of a clown. Ursus said,—

“The money bag grows palpably bigger.”

They played “Ursus Rursus” and “Chaos Vanquished.”

Between the acts Ursus exhibited his power

as an engastrimist, and executed marvels of ventriloquism. He imitated every cry which occurred in the audience—a song, a cry, enough to startle, so exact the imitation, the singer or the crier himself; and now and then he copied the hubbub of the public, and whistled as if there were a crowd of people within him. These were remarkable talents. Besides this, he harangued like Cicero, as we have just seen, sold his drugs, attended sickness, and even healed the sick.

Southwark was enthralled.

Ursus was satisfied with the applause of Southwark, but by no means astonished.

“They are the ancient Trinobantes,” he said.

Then he added,—“I must not mistake them, for delicacy of taste, for the Atrobates, who people Berkshire, or the Belgians, who inhabited Somersetshire, nor for the Parisians, who founded York.”

At every performance the yard of the inn, transformed into a pit, was filled with a ragged and enthusiastic audience. It was composed of watermen, chairmen, coachmen, and bargemen, and sailors, just ashore, spending their wages in feasting and women. In it there were felons, ruffians, and blackguards, who were soldiers condemned for some crime against discipline to wear their red coats, which were lined with black, inside out, and from thence the name of blackguard, which the French turn into *blagueurs*. All these flowed from the street into the theatre, and poured back from the theatre into the tap. The emptying of tankards did not decrease their success.

Amidst what it is usual to call the scum, there was one taller than the rest, bigger, stronger, less poverty-stricken, broader in the shoulders; dressed like the common people, but not ragged.

Admiring and applauding everything to the skies, clearing his way with his fists, wearing a disordered periwig, swearing, shouting, joking, never dirty, and, at need, ready to blacken an eye or pay for a bottle.

This frequenter was the passer-by whose cheer of enthusiasm has been recorded.

This connoisseur was suddenly fascinated, and had adopted the Laughing Man. He did not come every evening, but when he came he led the public—applause grew into acclamation—success rose not to the roof, for there was none, but to the clouds, for there were

plenty of them. Which clouds (seeing that there was no roof) sometimes wept over the masterpiece of Ursus.

His enthusiasm caused Ursus to remark this man, and Gwynplaine to observe him.

They had a great friend in this unknown visitor.

Ursus and Gwynplaine wanted to know him; at least, to know who he was.

One evening, Ursus was in the side scene, which was the kitchen-door of the Green Box, seeing Master Nicless standing by him, showed him this man in the crowd, and asked him,—

“Do you know that man?”

“Of course I do.”

“Who is he?”

“A sailor.”

“What is his name?” said Gwynplaine, interrupting.

“Tom-Jim-Jack,” replied the innkeeper.

Then as he redescended the steps at the back of the Green Box, to enter the inn, Master Nicless let fall this profound reflection, so deep as to be unintelligible,—

“What a pity that he should not be a lord. He would make a famous scoundrel.”

Otherwise, although established in the tavern, the group in the Green Box had in no way altered their manner of living, and held to their isolated habits. Except a few words exchanged now and then with the tavern-keeper, they held no communication with any of those who were living, either permanently or temporarily, in the inn; and continued to keep to themselves.

Since they had been at Southwark, Gwynplaine had made it his habit, after the performance and supper of both family and horses—when Ursus and Dea had gone to bed in their respective compartments—to breathe a little of the fresh air of the bowling-green, between eleven o’clock and midnight.

A certain vagrancy in our spirits impels us to take walks at night, and to saunter under the stars. There is a mysterious expectation in youth. Therefore it is that we are prone to wander out in the night without an object.

At that hour there was no one in the fair-ground, except, perhaps, some reeling drunkard, making staggering shadows in dark corners. The empty taverns were shut up, and the lower room in the Tadcaster Inn was dark, except where, in some corner, a solitary candle lighted a last reveller. An indistinct

glow gleamed through the window-shutters of the half-closed tavern, as Gwynplaine, pensive, content, and dreaming, happy in a haze of divine joy, passed backward and forward in front of the half-open door.

Of what was he thinking? Of Dea—of nothing—of everything—of the depths.

He never wandered far from the Green Box, being held, as by a thread, to Dea. A few steps away from it was far enough for him.

Then he returned, found the whole Green Box asleep, and went to bed himself.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### CONTRARIES FRATERNIZE IN HATE.

SUCCESS is hateful, especially to those whom it overthrows. It is rare that the eaten adore the eaters.

The Laughing Man had decidedly made a hit. The mountebanks around were indignant. A theatrical success is a syphon—it pumps in the crowd and creates emptiness all around. The shop opposite is done for. The increased receipts of the Green Box caused a corresponding decrease in the receipts of the surrounding shows. Those entertainments, popular up to that time, suddenly collapsed. It was like a low water-mark, showing inversely, but in perfect concordance, the rise here, the fall there. Theatres experience the effects of tides: they rise in one, only on condition of falling in another. The swarming foreigners who exhibited their talents and their trumpetings on the neighboring platforms, seeing themselves ruined by the Laughing Man, were despairing, yet dazzled. All the grimacers, all the clowns, all the merry-andrews envied Gwynplaine. How happy he must be with the snout of a wild beast! The buffoon mothers and dancers on the tight-rope, with pretty children, looked at them in anger, and pointing out Gwynplaine, would say,—“What a pity you have not a face like that!” Some beat their babes savagely for being pretty. More than one, had she known the secret, would have fashioned her son’s face in the Gwynplaine style. The head of an angel, which brings no money in, is not as good as that of a lucrative devil. One day the mother of a little child who was a marvel of beauty, and who acted a cupid, exclaimed,—

“Our children are failures! They only

succeeded with Gwynplaine." And shaking her fist at her son, she added,—“If I only knew your father, wouldn't he catch it!”

Gwynplaine was the goose with the golden eggs! What a marvelous phenomenon! There was an uproar through all the caravans. The mountebanks, enthusiastic and exasperated, looked at Gwynplaine and gnashed their teeth. Admiring anger is called envy. Then it howls! They tried to disturb “Chaos Vanquished;” made a cabal, hissed, scolded, shouted! This was an excuse for Ursus to make out-of-door harangues to the populace, and for his friend Tom-Jim-Jack to use his fists to re-establish order. His pugilistic marks of friendship brought him still more under the notice and regard of Ursus and Gwynplaine. At a distance, however, for the group in the Green Box sufficed to themselves, and held aloof from the rest of the world, and because Tom-Jim-Jack, this leader of the mob, seemed a sort of supreme bully, without a tie, without a friend; a smasher of windows, a manager of men, now here, now gone, hail-fellow-well-met with every one, companion of none.

This raging envy against Gwynplaine did not give in for a few friendly hits from Tom-Jim-Jack. The outeries having miscarried, the mountebanks of Tarrinzeau Field fell back on a petition. They addressed to the authorities. This is the usual course. Against an unpleasant success we first try to stir up the crowd and then we petition the magistrate.

With the merry-andrews the reverends allied themselves. The Laughing Man had inflicted a blow on the preachers. There were empty places not only in the caravans, but in the churches. The congregations in the churches of the five parishes in Southwark had dwindled away. People left before the sermon to go to Gwynplaine. “Chaos Vanquished,” the Green Box, the Laughing Man, all the abominations of Baal, eclipsed the eloquence of the pulpit. The voice crying in the desert, *vox clamantis in deserto*, is discontented, and is prone to call for the aid of the authorities. The clergy of the five parishes complained to the Bishop of London, who complained to her Majesty.

The complaint of the merry-andrews was based on religion. They declared it to be insulted. They described Gwynplaine as a sorcerer, and Ursus as an atheist. The rev-

erend gentlemen invoked social order. Setting orthodoxy aside they took action on the fact that acts of parliament were violated. It was clever. Because it was the period of Mr. Locke, who had died but six months previously—28th October, 1704—and when scepticism, which Bolingbroke had imbibed from Voltaire, was taking root. Later on Wesley came and restored the Bible, as Loyola restored the papacy.

Thus the Green Box was battered on both sides; by the merry-andrews, in the name of the Pentateuch, and by chaplains in the name of the police. In the name of heaven and of the inspectors of nuisances. The Green Box was denounced by the priests as an obstruction, and by the jugglers as sacrilegious.

Had they any pretext? Was there any excuse? Yes. What was the crime? This: there was the wolf. A dog was allowable; a wolf forbidden. In England the wolf is an outlaw. England admits the dog which barks, but not the dog which howls,—a shade of difference between the yard and the woods.

The rectors and vicars of the five parishes of Southwark called attention in their petitions to numerous parliamentary and royal statutes putting the wolf beyond the protection of the law. They moved for something like the imprisonment of Gwynplaine and the execution of the wolf, or at any rate for their banishment. The question was one of public importance, the danger to persons passing, etc. And, on this point, they appealed to the Faculty. They cited the opinion of the Eighty physicians of London, a learned body which dates from Henry VIII., which has a seal like that of the State, which can raise sick people to the dignity of being amenable to their jurisdiction, which has the right to imprison those who infringe its law and contravene its ordinances, and which, amongst other useful regulations for the health of the citizens, put beyond doubt this fact acquired by science: that if a wolf sees a man first, the man becomes hoarse for life. Besides, he may be bitten.

Homo, then, was a pretext.

Ursus heard of these designs through the inn-keeper. He was uneasy. He was afraid of two claws—the police and the justices. To be afraid of the magistracy, it is sufficient to be afraid, there is no need to be guilty. Ursus had no desire for contact with sheriffs,

provosts, bailiffs and coroners. His eagerness to make their acquaintance amounted to nil. His curiosity to see the magistrates was about as great as the hare's to see the greyhound.

He began to regret that he had come to London. "'Better' is the enemy of 'good,'" murmured he apart. "I thought the proverb was ill-considered. I was wrong. Stupid truths are true truths."

Against the coalition of powers—merry-andrews taking in hand the cause of religion, and chaplains, indignant in the name of medicine,—the poor Green Box, suspected of sorcery in Gwynplaine and of hydrophobia in Homo, had only one thing in its favor (but a thing of great power in England), municipal inactivity. It is to the local authorities letting things take their own course that Englishmen owe their liberty. Liberty in England behaves very much as the sea around England. It is a tide. Little by little manners surmount the law. A cruel system of legislation drowned under the wave of custom; a savage code of laws still visible through the transparency of universal liberty: such is England.

The Laughing Man, "Chaos Vanquished," and Homo might have mountebanks, preachers, bishops, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, Her Majesty, London, and the whole of England against them, and remain undisturbed so long as Southwark permitted.

The Green Box was the favorite amusement of the suburb, and the local authorities seemed disinclined to interfere. In England, indifference is protection. So long as the sheriff of the county of Surrey, to the jurisdiction of which Southwark belongs, did not move in the matter, Ursus breathed freely, and Homo could sleep on his wolf's ears.

So long as the hatred which it excited did not occasion acts of violence, it increased success. The Green Box was none the worse for it, for the time. On the contrary, hints were scattered that it contained something mysterious. Hence the Laughing Man became more and more popular. The public follow with gusto the scent of anything contraband. To be suspected is a recommendation. The people adopt by instinct that at which the finger is pointed. The thing which is denounced is like the savor of forbidden fruit; we rush to eat it. Besides, ap-

plause which irritates some one, especially if that some one is in authority, is sweet. To perform, whilst passing a pleasant evening, both an act of kindness to the oppressed, and of opposition to the oppressor, is agreeable. You are protecting at the same time that you are being amused. So the theatrical caravans on the bowling-green continued to howl and to cabal against the Laughing Man. Nothing could be better calculated to enhance his success. The shouts of one's enemies are useful, and give point and vitality to one's triumph. a friend wearies sooner in praise than an enemy in abuse. To abuse does not hurt. Enemies are ignorant of this fact. They cannot help insulting us, and this constitutes their use. They cannot hold their tongues, and thus keep the public awake.

The crowds which flocked to "Chaos Vanquished" increased daily.

Ursus kept what Master Nicless had said of intriguers and complaints in high places to himself, and did not tell Gwynplaine, lest it should trouble the ease of his acting by creating anxiety. If evil was to come, he would be sure to know it soon enough.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE WAPENTAKE.

ONCE, however, he thought it his duty to derogate from this prudence, for prudence' sake, thinking that it might be well to make Gwynplaine uneasy. It is true that this idea arose from a circumstance much graver, in the opinion of Ursus, than the cabals of the fair or of the church.

Gwynplaine, as he picked up a farthing, which had fallen when counting the receipts, had, in the presence of the innkeeper, drawn a contrast between the farthing, representing the misery of the people, and the die, representing, under the figure of Annie, the parasitical magnificence of the throne—an ill-sounding speech. This observation was repeated by Master Nicless, and had such a run, that it reached to Ursus through Fibi and Vinos. It put Ursus into a fever. Seditious words, lèse Majesté. He took Gwynplaine severely to task. "Watch over your abominable jaws. There is a rule for the great—to do nothing; and a rule for the small—to say nothing. The poor man has but one friend, silence. He should only pro-

nounce one syllable : 'yes.' To confess and to consent is all the right he has. 'Yes,' to the judge; 'yes,' to the king. Great people, if it please them to do so, beat us. I have received blows from them. It is their prerogative; and they lose nothing of their greatness by breaking our bones. The ossifrage is a species of eagle. Let us venerate the sceptre, which is the first of staves. Respect is prudence, and mediocrity is safety. To insult the king is to put oneself in the same danger as a girl rashly paring the nails of a lion. They tell me that you have been prattling about the farthing, which is the same thing as the liard, and that you have found fault with the august medallion, for which they sell us at market the eighth part of a salt herring. Take care; let us be serious. Consider the existence of pains and penalties. Suck in these legislative truths. You are in a country in which the man who cuts down a tree three years old, is quietly taken off to the gallows. As to swearers, their feet are put into the stocks. The drunkard is shut up in a barrel with the bottom out, so that he can walk, with a hole in the top, through which his head is passed, and with two in the bung for his hands, so that he cannot lie down. He who strikes another one in Westminster Hall is imprisoned for life and has his goods confiscated. Whoever strikes anyone in the king's palace has his hand struck off. A fillip on the nose chances to bleed, and, behold! you are maimed for life. He who is convicted of heresy in the bishop's court is burnt alive. It was for no great matter that Cuthbert Simpson was quartered on a turnstile. Three years since, in 1702, which is not long ago, you see, they placed in the pillory a scoundrel, called Daniel Defoe, who had had the audacity to print the names of the Members of Parliament who had spoken on the previous evening. He who commits high treason is disembowled alive, and they tear out his heart and buffet his cheeks with it. Impress on yourself notions of right and justice. Never allow yourself to speak a word, and at the first cause of anxiety, run for it. Such is the bravery which I counsel and which I practise. In the way of temerity, imitate the birds; in the way of talking, imitate the fishes. England has one admirable point in her favor, that her legislation is very mild."

His admonition over, Ursus remained un-

easy for some time. Gwynplaine not at all. The intrepidity of youth arises from want of experience. However, it seemed that Gwynplaine had good reason for his easy mind, for the weeks flowed on peacefully, and no bad consequences seemed to have resulted from his observations about the queen.

Ursus, we know, lacked apathy, and, like a roebuck on the watch, kept a look-out in every direction. One day, a short time after his sermon to Gwynplaine, as he was looking out from the window in the wall which commanded the field, he became suddenly pale.

"Gwynplaine?"

"What?"

"Look."

"Where?"

"In the field."

"Well?"

"Do you see that passer-by?"

"The man in black?"

"Yes."

"Who has a kind of mace in his hand?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"Well, Gwynplaine, that man is a wapentake."

"What is a wapentake?"

"He is the bailiff of the hundred."

"What is the bailiff of the hundred?"

"He is the *præpositus hundredi*."

"And what is the *præpositus hundredi*?"

"He is a terrible officer."

"What has he got in his hand?"

"The iron weapon."

"What is the iron weapon?"

"A thing made of iron."

"What does he do with that?"

"First of all, he swears upon it. It is for that reason that he is called the wapentake."

"And then?"

"Then he touches you with it."

"With what?"

"With the iron weapon."

"The wapentake touches you with the iron weapon?"

"Yes."

"What does that mean?"

"That means, follow me."

"And must you follow?"

"Yes."

"Whither?"

"How should I know?"

"But he tells you where he is going to take you?"

"No."

"How is that?"

"He says nothing and you say nothing."

"But——"

"He touches you with the iron weapon. All is over then. You must go."

"But where?"

"After him."

"But where?"

"Wherever he likes, Gwynplaine."

"And if you resist?"

"You are hanged."

Ursus looked out of the window again, and drawing an long breath, said,—

"Thank God! He has passed. He was not coming here."

Ursus was perhaps unreasonably alarmed about the indiscreet remark, and the consequences likely to result from the unconsidered words of Gwynplaine.

Master Nicless, who having heard them, had no interest in compromising the poor inhabitants of the Green Box. He was amassing, at the same time as the Laughing Man, a nice little fortune. "Chaos Vanquished" had succeeded in two ways. While it made art triumph on the stage, it made drunkenness prosper in the tavern.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE MOUSE EXAMINED BY THE CATS.

URSUS was soon afterwards startled by another alarming circumstance. This time it was he himself who was concerned. He was summoned to Bishopsgate before a commission composed of three disagreeable countenances. They belonged to three doctors, called overseers. One was a Doctor of Theology, delegated by the Dean of Westminster; another, a Doctor of Medicine, delegated by the College of Surgeons; the third, a Doctor in History and Civil Law, delegated by Gresham College. These three experts *in omne re sciibile* had the censorship of everything said in public throughout the bounds of the hundred and thirty parishes of London, the seventy-three of Middlesex, and, by extension, the five Southwark.

Such theological jurisdictions still subsist in England, and do good service. In December, 1868, by sentence of the Court of Arches, confirmed by the decision of the Privy Council, the Reverend Mackonochie

was censured, besides being condemned in costs, for having placed lighted candles on a table. The liturgy allows no jokes.

Ursus, then, one fine day received from the delegated doctors an order to appear before them, which was luckily, given into his own hands, and which he was therefore enabled to keep secret. Without saying a word, he obeyed the citation, shuddering at the thought that he might be considered culpable to the extent of having the appearance of being suspected of a certain amount of rashness. He who had so recommended silence to others had here a rough lesson. *Garrule, sana teipsum.*

The three doctors, delegated and appointed overseers, sat at Bishopsgate, at the end of a room on the ground floor, in three armchairs covered with black leather, with three busts of Minos, Æacus, and Rhadamanthus, in the wall above their heads, a table before them, and at their feet a form for the accused.

Ursus, introduced by a tipstaff, of placid but severe expression, entered, perceived the doctors, and immediately in his own mind, gave to each of them the name of the judge of the infernal regions represented by the bust placed above his head. Minos, the president, the representative of theology, made him a sign to sit down on the form.

Ursus made a proper bow—that is to say, bowed to the ground; and knowing that bears are charmed by honey, and doctors by Latin, he said, keeping his body still bent respectfully,—

"*Tres faciunt capitulum!*"

Then, with head inclined (for modesty disarms) he sat down on the form.

Each of the three doctors had before him a bundle of papers, of which he was turning the leaves.

Minos began.

"You speak in public?"

"Yes," replied Ursus.

"By what right?"

"I am a philosopher."

"That gives no right."

"I am also a mountebank," said Ursus.

"That is a different thing."

Ursus breathed again, but with humility.

Minos resumed,—

"As a mountebank, you may speak; as a philosopher, you must keep silence."

"I will try," said Ursus.

Then he thought to himself.

"I may speak, but I must be silent. How complicated."

He was much alarmed.

The same overseer continued,—

"You say things which do not sound right. You insult religion. You deny the most evident truths. You propagate revolting errors. For instance, you have said that the fact of virginity excludes the possibility of maternity."

Ursus lifted his eyes meekly,—*"I did not say that. I said that the fact of maternity excludes the possibility of virginity."*

Minos was thoughtful, and mumbled, *"True, that is the contrary."*

It was really the same thing. But Ursus had parried the first blow.

Minos, meditating on the answer just given by Ursus, sank into the depths of his own imbecility, and kept silent.

The overseer of history, or, as Ursus called him, Rhadamanthus, covered the retreat of Minos by this interpolation, *"Accused! your audacity and your errors are of two sorts. You have denied that the battle of Pharsalia would have been lost because Brutus and Cassius had met a negro."*

*"I said,"* murmured Ursus, *"that there was something in the fact that Cæsar was the better captain."*

The man of history passed, without transition, to mythology.

*"You have excused the infamous acts of Actæon."*

*"I think,"* said Ursus, insinuatingly, *"that a man is not dishonored by having seen a naked woman."*

*"Then you are wrong,"* said the Judge, severely. Rhadamanthus returned to history.

*"Apropos to the accidents which happened to the cavalry of Mithridates, you have contested the virtues of herbs and plants. You have denied that a herb like the securiduca, could make the shoes of horses fall off."*

*"Pardon me,"* replied Ursus. *"I said that the power existed only in the herb sferra cavallo. I never denied the virtue of any herb,"* and he added, in a low voice, *"nor of any woman."*

By this extraneous addition to his answer Ursus proved to himself that, anxious as he was, he was not disheartened. Ursus was a compound of terror and presence of mind.

*"To continue,"* resumed Rhadamanthus; *"You have declared it was folly in Scipio,*

*when he wished to open the gates of Carthage, to use as a key of herb æthiopis, because the herb æthiopis has not the property of breaking locks."*

*"I merely said that he would have done better to have used the herb lunaria."*

*"That is a matter of opinion,"* murmured Rhadamanthus, touched in his turn. And the man of history was silent.

The theologian, Minos, having returned to consciousness, questioned Ursus anew. He had had time to consult his notes.

*"You have classed orpiment amongst the products of arsenic, and you have said that it is a poison. The Bible denies this."*

*"The Bible denies, but arsenic affirms it,"* sighed Ursus.

The man whom Ursus called Æacus, and who was the envoy of medicine, had not yet spoken, but now looking down on Ursus, with proudly half-closed eyes, he said,—

*"The answer is not without some show of reason."*

Ursus thanked him with his most cringing smile. Minos frowned frightfully. *"I resume,"* said Minos. *"You have said that it is false that the basilisk is the king of serpents, under the name of cockatrice."*

*"Very reverend sir,"* said Ursus, *"so little did I desire to insult the basilisk that I have given out as certain that it has a man's head."*

*"Be it so,"* said Minos severely; *"but you added that Poerius had seen one with the head of a falcon. Can you prove it?"*

*"Not easily,"* said Ursus.

Here he had lost a little ground.

Minos, seizing the advantage, pushed it.

*"You have said that a converted Jew has not a nice smell."*

*"Yes. But I added that a Christian that becomes a Jew has a nasty one."*

Minos lost his eyes over the accusing documents.

*"You have affirmed and propagated things that are impossible. You have said that Elien had seen an elephant write sentences."*

*"Nay, very reverend gentlemen! I simply said that Oppian had heard an hippopotamus discuss a philosophical problem."*

*"You have declared that it is not true that a dish made of beech-wood will become covered of itself with all the viands that one can desire."*

*"I said, that if it had this virtue, it must be that you received it from the devil."*

"That I received it!"

"No, most reverend sir. I, nobody, everybody!"

Aside, Ursus thought, "I don't know what I am saying."

But his outward confusion, though extreme, was not distinctly visible. Ursus struggled with it.

"All this," Minos began again, "implies a certain belief in the devil."

Ursus held his own.

"Very reverend sir, I am not an unbeliever with regard to the devil. Belief in the devil is the reverse side of faith in God. The one proves the other. He who does not believe a little in the devil, does not believe much in God. He who believes in the sun must believe in the shadow. The devil is the night of God. What is night? The proof of day."

Ursus here extemporized a fathomless combination of philosophy and religion. Minos remained pensive, and relapsed into silence.

Ursus breathed afresh.

A sharp onslaught now took place. *Æacus*, the medical delegate, who had disdainfully protected Ursus against the theologian, now turned suddenly from auxiliary into assailant. He placed his closed fist on his bundle of papers, which was large and heavy. Ursus received this apostrophe full in the breast:

"It is proved that crystal is sublimated ice, and that the diamond is sublimated crystal. It is averred that ice becomes crystal in a thousand years, and crystal diamond in a thousand ages. You have denied this."

"Nay," replied Ursus, with sadness. "I only said that in a thousand years ice had time to melt, and that a thousand ages were difficult to count."

The examination went on; questions and answers clashed like swords.

"You have denied that plants can talk."

"Not at all. But to do so they must grow under a gibbet."

"Do you own that the mandragora cries?"

"No; but it sings."

"You have denied that the fourth finger of the left hand has a cordial virtue."

"I only said that to sneeze the left was a bad sign."

"You have spoken rashly and disrespectfully of the phoenix."

"Learned judge, I merely said that when

he wrote that the brain of the phoenix was a delicate morsel, but that it produced headache, Plutarch was a little out his reckoning inasmuch as the phoenix never existed."

"A detestable speech! The cinnamaker which makes its nest with sticks of cinnamon, the rhintacus that Parysatis used in the manufacture of his poisons, the manuodiatas which is the bird of paradise, and the semenda, which has a threefold beak, have been mistaken for the phoenix; but the phoenix has existed."

"I do not deny it."

"You are a stupid ass."

"I desire to be thought no better."

"You have confessed that the elder tree cures the quinzey, but you added that it was not because it has in its root a fairy excrescence."

"I said it was because Judas hung himself on an elder tree."

"A plausible opinion," growled the theologian, glad to strike his little blow at *Æacus*.

Arrogance repulsed soon turns to anger. *Æacus* was enraged.

"Wandering mountebank! you wander as much in mind as with your feet. Your tendencies are out of the way and suspicious. You approach the bounds of sorcery. You have dealings with unknown animals. You speak to the populace of things that exist but for you alone, and the nature of which is unknown, such as the hæmorrhous."

"The hæmorrhous is a viper which was seen by Tremellius."

This repartee produced a certain disorder in the irritated science of Doctor *Æacus*.

Ursus added, "The existence of the hæmorrhous is quite as true as that of the odoriferous hyena, and of the civit described by Castellus."

*Æacus* got out of the difficulty by charging home.

"Here are your own words, and very diabolical words they are. Listen."

With his eye on his notes, *Æacus* read,—

"Two planets, the thalagssigle and the aglaphotis, are luminous in the evening, flowers by day, stars by night;" and looking steadily at Ursus, "What have you to say to that?"

Ursus answered,—

"Every plant is a lamp. Its perfume is its light."

*Æacus* turned over other pages.



"You have denied that the vesicles of the otter are equivalent to castoreum."

"I merely said that perhaps it may be necessary to receive the teaching of Ætius on this point with some reserve."

Æacus became furious.

"You practice medicine?"

"I practice medicine," sighed Ursus timidly.

"On living things?"

"Rather than on dead ones," said Ursus.

Ursus defended himself stoutly, but dully; an admirable mixture, in which meekness predominated. He spoke with such gentleness, that Dotor Æacus felt that he must insult him.

"What are you murmuring there?" said he rudely.

Ursus was amazed, and restricted himself to saying,—

"Murmurings are for the young, and moans for the aged. Alas, I moan!"

Æacus replied,—

"Be assured of this—if you attend a sick person, and he dies, you will be punished by death."

Ursus hazarded a question.

"And if he gets well?"

"In that case," said the doctor, softening his voice, "you will be punished by death."

"There is little difference," said Ursus.

The doctor replied,—

"If death ensues we punish gross ignorance; if recovery, we punish presumption. The gibbet in either case."

"I was ignorant of the circumstance," murmured Ursus, "I thank you for teaching me. One does not know all the beauties of the law."

"Take care of yourself."

"Religiously," said Ursus.

"We know what you are about."

"As for me," thought Ursus, "that is more than I always know myself."

"We could send you to prison."

"I see that perfectly, gentlemen."

"You cannot deny your infractions nor your encroachments."

"My philosophy asks pardon."

"Great audacity has been attributed to you."

"That is quite a mistake."

"It is said that you have cured the sick."

"I am the victim of calumny."

The three pairs of eyebrows which were so

horribly fixed on Ursus contracted. The three wise faces drew near to each other, and whispered. Ursus had the vision of a vague fool's cap sketched out above those three empowered heads. The low and requisite whispering of the trio was of some minutes' duration, during which time Ursus felt all the ice and all the scorch of agony. At length Minos, who was president, turned to him and said, angrily,—

"Go away!"

Ursus felt something like Jonas when he was leaving the belly of the whale.

Minos continued,—

"You are discharged."

Ursus said to himself,—

"They won't catch me at this again. Good bye, medicine!"

And he added, in his innermost heart,—

"From henceforth I will carefully allow them to die."

Bent double, he bowed everywhere; to the doctors, to the busts, the tables, the walls, and retiring backwards through the door, disappeared almost as a shadow melting into air.

He left the hall slowly, like an innocent man, and rushed from the street rapidly, like a guilty one. The officers of justice are so singular and obscure in their ways, that even when acquitted, one flies from them.

As he fled he mumbled,—

"I am well out of it. I am the savant untamed; they the servants civilized. Doctors cavil at the learned. False science is the excrement of the true, and is employed to the destruction of philosophers. Philosophers, as they produce sophists, produce their own scourge. Of the dung of the thrush is born the mistletoe, with which is made birdlime, with which the thrush is captured. *Turdus sibi malum cacat.*"

We do not represent Ursus as a refined man. He was imprudent enough to use words which expressed his thoughts. He had no more taste than Voltaire.

When Ursus returned to the Green Box, he told Master Nicless that he had been delayed by following a pretty woman, and let a word escape him concerning his adventure.

Except in the evening when he said in a low voice to Homo,—

"See here, I have vanquished the three heads of Cerberus."

## CHAPTER VII.

WHY SHOULD A GOLD PIECE LOWER ITSELF  
BY MIXING WITH A HEAP OF PENNIES?

AN event happened.

The Tadcaster Inn became more and more a furnace of joy and laughter. Never was there more resonant gayety. The landlord and his boy were become insufficient to draw the ale, stout, and porter. In the evening in the lower room, with its windows all aglow, there was not a vacant table. They sang, they shouted; the great old hearth, vaulted like an oven, with its iron bars piled with coals, shone out brightly. It was like a house of fire and noise.

In the yard—that is to say, in the theatre—the crowd was greater still.

Crowds as great as the suburb of Southwark could supply so thronged the performances of “Chaos Vanquished,” that directly the curtain was raised—that is to say, the platform of the Green Box was lowered—every place was filled. The windows were alive with spectators, the balcony was crammed. Not a single paving stone in the paved yard was to be seen. It seemed paved with faces.

Only the compartment for the nobility remained empty.

There was thus a space in the centre of the balcony, a black hole, called in metaphorical slang, an oven. No one there. Crowds everywhere except in that one spot.

One evening it was occupied.

It was on a Saturday, a day on which the English make all haste to amuse themselves before the *ennui* of Sunday. The hall was full.

We say *hall*. Shakespeare for a long time had to use the yard of an inn for a theatre, and he called it *hall*.

Just as the curtain rose on the prologue of “Chaos Vanquished,” with Ursus, Homo, and Gwynplaine on the stage, Ursus, from habit, cast a look at the audience, and felt a sensation.

The compartment for the nobility was occupied. A lady was sitting alone in the middle of the box, on the Utrecht velvet armchair. She was alone, and she filled the box. Certain beings seem to give out light. This lady, like Dea, had a light in herself, but a light of a different character.

Dea was pale, this lady was pink. Dea was the twilight, this lady, Aurora. Dea was beautiful, this lady was superb. Dea was innocence, candor, fairnes, alabaster—this woman was of the purple, and one felt that she did not fear the blush. Her irradiation overflowed the box, she sat in the midst of it, immovable, in the spreading majesty of an idol.

Amidst the sordid crowd she shone out grandly, as with the radiance of a carbuncle. She inundated it with so much light that she drowned it in shadow, and all the mean faces in it underwent eclipse. Her splendor blotted out all else.

Every eye was turned towards her.

Tom-Jim-Jack was in the crowd. He was lost like the rest in the nimbus of this dazzling creature.

The lady at first absorbed the whole attention of the public, who had crowded to the performance, thus somewhat diminishing the opening effects of “Chaos Vanquished.”

Whatever might be the air of dreamland about her, for those who were near she was a woman; perchance, too much a woman.

She was tall and amply formed, and showed as much as possible of her magnificent person. She wore heavy earrings of pearls, with which were mixed those whimsical jewels called “keys of England.” Her upper dress was of Indian muslin, embroidered all over with gold—a great luxury, because those muslin dresses then cost six hundred crowns. A large diamond brooch closed her chemise, the which she wore so as to display her shoulders and bosom, in the immodest fashion of the time; the chemisette was made of that lawn of which Anne of Austria had sheets so fine that they could be passed through a ring. She wore what seemed like a cuirass of rubies—some uncut, but polished, and precious stones were sewn all over the body of her dress. Then, her eyebrows were blackened with Indian ink; and her arms, elbows, shoulders, chin, and nostrils, with the top of her eyelids, the lobes of her ears, the palms of her hands, the tips of her fingers, were tinted with a glowing and provoking touch of color. Above all, she wore an expression of implacable determination to be beautiful. This reached the point of ferocity. She was like a panther, with the power of turning cat at will, and caressing. One of her eyes was blue, the other black.

Gwynplaine, as well as Ursus, contemplated her.

The Green Box somewhat resembled a phantasmagoria in its representations. "Chaos Vanquished" was rather a dream than a piece; it generally produced on the audience the effect of a vision. Now, this effect was reflected on the actors. The house took performers by surprise, and they were thunder-struck in their turn. It was a rebound of fascination.

The woman watched them, and they watched her.

At the distance at which they were placed, and in that luminous mist which is the half-light of a theatre, details were lost, and it was like a hallucination. Of course it was a woman, but was it not a chimera as well? The penetration of her light into their obscurity stupefied them. It was like the appearance of an unknown planet. It came from the world of the happy. Her irradiation amplified her figure. The lady was covered with nocturnal glittering, like a milky way. Her precious stones were stars. The diamond brooch was perhaps a pleiad. The splendid beauty of her bosom seemed supernatural. They felt, as they looked upon the star-like creature, the momentary but thrilling approach of the regions of felicity. It was out of the heights of a Paradise that she leant towards their mean-looking Green Box, and revealed to the gaze of its wretched audience her expression of inexorable serenity. As she satisfied her unbounded curiosity, she fed at the same time the curiosity of the public.

It was the Zenith permitting the Abyss to look at it.

Ursus, Gwynplaine, Vinos, Fibi, the crowd, every one had succumbed to her dazzling beauty Dea, ignorant in her darkness.

An apparition was indeed before them; but none of the ideas usually evoked by the word were realized in the lady's appearance.

There was nothing about her diaphanous, nothing undecided, nothing floating, no mist. She was an apparition; rose-colored and fresh, and full of health. Yet, under the optical condition in which Ursus and Gwynplaine were placed, she looked like a vision. There are fleshy phantoms, called vampires. Such a queen as she, though a spirit to the crowd, consumes twelve hundred thousand a year, to keep her health.

Behind the lady, in the shadow, her page was to be perceived, *el mozo*, a little child-like man, fair and pretty with a serious face. A very young and very grave servant, was the fashion at that period.

This page was dressed from top to toe, in scarlet velvet, and had on his skull-cap, which was embroidered with gold, a bunch of curled feathers. This was the sign of a high class of service, and indicated attendance on a very great lady.

The lackey is part of the lord, and it was impossible not to remark, in the shadow of his mistress, the train-bearing page. Memory often takes notes unconsciously; and, without Gwynplaine's suspecting it, the round cheeks, the serious mien, the embroidered and plumed cap of the lady's page left some trace on his mind. The page, however, did nothing to call attention to himself. To do so is to be wanting in respect. He held himself aloof and passive at the back of the box, retiring as far as the closed door permitted.

Notwithstanding the presence of her train-bearer, the lady was not the less alone in the compartment, since a valet counts for nothing.

However powerful a diversion had been produced by this person, who produced the effect of a personage, the dénouement of "Chaos Vanquished" was more powerful still. The impression which it made was, as usual, irresistible. Perhaps, even, there occurred in the hall, on account of the radiant spectator (for sometimes the spectator is part of the spectacle), an increase of electricity. The contagion of Gwynplaine's laugh was more triumphant than ever. The whole audience fell into an indescribable epilepsy of hilarity through which could be distinguished the sonorous and magisterial ha! ha! of Tom-Jim-Jack.

Only the unknown lady looked at the performance with the immobility of a statue, and with her eyes, like those of a phantom, she laughed not. A spectre, but sun-born.

The performance over, the platform drawn up, and the family reassembled in the Green Box, Ursus opened and emptied on the supper-table the bag of receipts. From a heap of pennies, there slid suddenly forth a Spanish gold onza.

"Hers!" cried Ursus.

The onza amidst the pence covered with verdigris was a type of the lady amidst the crowd.

"She has paid an onza for her seat," cried Ursus, with enthusiasm.

Just then, the hotel-keeper entered the Green Box, and, passing his arm out of the window at the back of it, opened the loophole in the wall of which we have already spoken, which gave a view over the field, and which was level with the window, then he made a silent sign to Ursus to look out. A carriage, swarming with plumed footmen carrying torches and magnificently appointed, was driving off at fast trot.

Ursus took the piece of gold between his forefinger and thumb respectfully, and, showing it to Master Nicless said,—

"She is a goddess."

Then, his eyes falling on the carriage which was about to turn the corner of the field, and on the imperial of which the footmen's torches lighted up a golden coronet, with eight strawberry leaves, he exclaimed:—

"She is more. . . She is a duchess."

The carriage disappeared. The rumbling of its wheels died away in the distance.

Ursus remained some moments in an ecstasy holding the gold piece between his finger and thumb, as in a monstrance, elevating it as the priest elevates the host.

Then he placed it on the table, and, as he contemplated it, began to talk of "Madam."

The innkeeper replied—

"She was a duchess." Yes. They knew her title. But her name? of that they were ignorant. Master Nicless had been close to the carriage, and seen the coat of arms and the footmen covered with lace. The coachman had a wig on which might have belonged to a Lord Chancellor. The carriage was of that rare design called, in Spain, *coche-tumbon*, a splendid build, with a top like a tomb, which makes a magnificent support for a coronet. The page was a man in miniature, so small that he could sit on the step of the carriage outside the door. The duty of those pretty creatures was to bear the trains of their mistresses. They also bore their messages. And did you remark the plumed cap of the page? How grand it was! You pay a fine if you wear those plumes without the right of doing so. Master Nicless had seen the lady, too, quite close. A kind of queen. Such wealth gives beauty. The skin is whiter, the eye more proud, the gait more noble, and grace more insolent. Nothing can equal the elegant impertinence of hands which never

work. Master Nicless told the story of all the magnificence of the white skin with the blue veins, the neck, the shoulders, the arms, the touch of paint everywhere, the pearl earrings, the head-dress powdered with gold; the profusion of stones, the rubies, the diamonds.

"Less brilliant than her eyes," murmured Ursus.

Gwynplaine said nothing.

Dea listened.

"And do you know," said the tavern-keeper, "the most wonderful thing of all?"

"What?" said Ursus.

"I saw her get into her carriage."

"What then?"

"She did not get in alone."

"Nonsense!"

"Some one got in with her."

"Who?"

"Guess."

"The king," said Ursus.

"In the first place," said Master Nicless, "there is no king at present. We are not living under a king. Guess who got into the carriage with the duchess."

"Jupiter," said Ursus.

The hotel-keeper replied,—

"Tom-Jim-Jack."

Gwynplaine, who had not said a word, broke silence.

"Tom-Jim-Jack!" he cried.

There was a pause of astonishment, during which the low voice of Dea was heard to say,—

"Cannot this woman be prevented coming?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SYMPTOMS OF POISONING.

THE "apparition" did not return. It did not reappear in the theatre, but it reappeared to the memory of Gwynplaine. Gwynplaine was, to a certain degree, troubled. It seemed to him that for the first time in his life he had seen a woman.

He made that first stumble, a strange dream. We should beware of the nature of the reveries that fasten on us. Reverie has in it the mystery and subtlety of an odor. It is to thought what perfume is to the tuberose. It is at times the exudation of a venomous idea, and it penetrates like a vapor. You may poison yourself with reveries, as with flowers.

An intoxicating suicide, exquisite and malignant. The suicide of the soul is evil thought. In it is the poison. Reverie attracts, cajoles, lures, entwines, and then makes you its accomplice. It makes you bear your half in the trickeries which it plays on conscience, it charms; then it corrupts you. We may say of reverie as of play, one begins by being a dupe, and ends by being a cheat.

Gwynplaine dreamed.

He had never before seen Woman. He had seen the shadow in the women of the populace, and he had seen the soul in Dea.

He had just seen the reality.

A warm and living skin, under which one felt the circulation of passionate blood; an outline with the precision of marble and the undulation of the wave; a high and impassive mien, mingling refusal with attraction, and summing itself up in its own glory; hair of the color of the reflection from a furnace; a gallantry of adornment producing in herself and in others a tremor of voluptuousness, the half-revealed nudity betraying a disdainful desire to be coveted at a distance by the crowd; an irradicable coquetry; the charm of impenetrability, temptation seasoned by the glimpse of perdition, a promise to the senses and a menace to the mind; a double anxiety, the one desire, the other fear. He had just seen these things. He had just seen Woman.

He had seen more and less than a woman; he had seen a female.

And at the same time an Olympian. The female of a god.

The mystery of sex had just been revealed to him.

And where? On the inaccessible heights at an infinite distance.

O mocking destiny! The soul, that celestial essence, he possessed; he held it in his hand. It was Dea. Sex, that terrestrial embodiment, he perceived in the heights of heaven. It was that woman.

A duchess!

"More than a goddess," Ursus had said.

What a precipice! Even dreams dissolved before such a perpendicular height to escalate.

Was he going to commit the folly of dream ing about the unknown beauty?

He debated with himself.

He recalled all that Ursus had said of

high stations which are almost royal. The philosopher's disquisitions, which had hitherto seemed so useless, now became landmarks for his thoughts. A very thin layer of forgetfulness often lies over our memory, through which at times we catch a glimpse of all beneath it. His fancy ran on that august world, the peerage, to which the lady belonged, and which was so inexorably placed above the inferior world, the common people, of which he was one.

And was he even one of the people? Was not he, the mountebank, below the lowest of the low? For the first time since he had arrived at the age of reflection, he felt his heart vaguely contracted by a sense of his baseness, and of that which we nowadays call abasement. The paintings and the catalogues of Ursus, his lyrical inventories, his dithyrambs of castles, parks, fountains, and colonnades, his catalogues of riches and of power, revived in the memory of Gwynplaine in the relief of reality mingled with mist. He was possessed with the image of this zenith. That a man should be a lord!—it seemed chimerical. It was so, however. Incredible thing! There were lords! But were they of flesh and blood like ourselves? It seemed doubtful. He felt that he lay at the bottom of all darkness, encompassed by a wall, while he could just perceive in the far distance above his head, through the mouth of the pit, a dazzling confusion of azure, of figures, and of rays, which was Olympus. In the midst of this glory the duchess shone out resplendent.

He felt for this woman a strange, inexpressible longing, combined with a conviction of the impossibility of attainment. This poignant contradiction returned to his mind again and again, notwithstanding every effort. He saw near to him, even within his reach, in close and tangible reality, the soul; and in the unattainable—in the depths of the ideal—the flesh. None of these thoughts attained to certain shape. They were as a vapor within him, changing every instant its form, and floating away. But the darkness which the vapor caused was intense.

He did not form even in his dreams any hope of reaching the heights where the duchess dwelt. Luckily for him.

The vibration of such ladders of fancy, if ever we put our foot upon them, may render our brains dizzy for ever. Intending to scale

Olympus, we reach Bedlam: any distinct feeling of actual desire would have terrified him. He entertained none of that nature.

Besides, was he likely ever to see the lady again? Most probably not. To fall in love with a passing light on the horizon, madness cannot reach to that pitch. To make loving eyes at a star even, is not incomprehensible. It is seen again, it reappears, it is fixed in the sky. But can anyone be enamored of a flash of lightning?

Dreams flowed and ebbed within him. The majestic and gallant idol at the back of the box had cast a light over his diffused ideas, then faded away. He thought, yet thought not of it; turned to other things—returned to it. It rocked about in his brain,—nothing more. It broke his sleep for several nights. Sleeplessness is as full of dreams as sleep.

It is almost impossible to express in their exact limits the abstract evolutions of the brain. The inconvenience of words is that they are more marked in form than ideas. All ideas have indistinct boundary lines, words have not. A certain diffused phase of the soul ever escapes words. Expression has its frontiers, thought has none.

The depths of our secret souls are so vast that Gwynplaine's dreams scarcely touched Dea. Dea reigned sacred in the centre of his soul; nothing could approach her.

Still (for such contradictions make up the soul of man), there was a conflict within him. Was he conscious of it? Scarcely.

In his heart of hearts he felt a collision of desires. We all have our weak points. Its nature would have been clear to Ursus; but to Gwynplaine it was not.

Two instincts—one the ideal, the other sexual—were struggling within him. Such contests occur between the angels of light and darkness on the edge of the abyss.

At length the angel of darkness was overthrown. One day Gwynplaine suddenly thought no more of the unknown woman.

The struggle between two principles,—the duel between his earthly and his heavenly nature,—had taken place within his soul, and at such a depth that he had understood it but dimly. One thing was certain, that he had never for one moment ceased to adore Dea.

He had been attacked by a violent disor-

der, his blood had been fevered; but it was over. Dea alone remained.

Gwynplaine would have been much astonished had any one told him that Dea had ever been, even for a moment, in danger; and in a week or two the phantom which had threatened the hearts of both their souls faded away.

Within Gwynplaine nothing remained but the heart, which was the hearth, and the love, which was its fire.

Besides, we have just said that "the duchess" did not return.

Ursus thought it all very natural. "The lady with the gold piece" is a phenomenon. She enters, pays, vanishes. It would be too much joy were she to return.

As to Dea, she made no allusion to the woman who had come and passed away. She listened, perhaps, and was sufficiently enlightened by the sighs of Ursus, and now and then by some significant exclamation, such as,—

*"One does not get ounces of gold every day!"*

She spoke no more of "the woman." This showed deep instinct. The soul takes obscure precautions, in the secrets of which it is not always admitted itself. To keep silence about anyone seems to keep them afar off. One fears that questions may call them back. We put silence between us, as if we were shutting the door.

So the incident fell into oblivion.

Was it ever anything? Had it ever occurred? Could it be said that a shadow had floated between Gwynplaine and Dea? Dea did not know of it, nor Gwynplaine either. No; nothing had occurred? The duchess herself was blurred in the distant perspective like an illusion. It had been but a momentary dream passing over Gwynplaine, out of which he had awakened.

When it fades away, a reverie, like a mist, leaves no trace behind; and when the cloud has passed on, love shines out as brightly in the heart as the sun in the sky.

## CHAPTER IX.

ABYSSUS ABYSSUM VOCAT.

ANOTHER face disappeared; Tom-Jim-Jack's. Suddenly he ceased to frequent the Tadcaster Inn.

Persons so situated as to be able to observe other phases of fashionable life in London, might have seen that about this time the *Weekly Gazette*, between two extracts from parish registers, announced the departure of Lord David Dirry-Moir, by order of her majesty, to take command of his frigate in the white squadron then cruising off the coast of Holland.

Ursus, perceiving that Tom-Jim-Jack did not return, was troubled by his absence. He had not seen Tom-Jim-Jack since the day on which he had driven off in the same carriage with the lady of the gold piece. It was, indeed, an enigma who this Tom-Tim-Jack could be, who carried off duchesses under his arm. What an interesting investigation ! What questions to propound ! What things to be said. Therefore Ursus said not a word.

Ursus, who had had experience, knew the smart caused by rash curiosity. Curiosity ought always to be proportioned to the curious. By listening, we risk our ear; by watching, we risk our eye. Prudent people neither hear nor see. Tom-Tim-Jack had got into a princely carriage. The tavern-keeper had seen him. It appeared so extraordinary that the sailor should sit by the lady that it made Ursus circumspect. The caprices of those in high life ought to be sacred to the lower orders. The reptiles called the poor had best squat in their holes when they see anything out of the way. Quiescence is a power. Shut your eyes, if you have not the luck to be blind; stop up your ears, if you have not the good fortune to be deaf; paralyze your tongue, if you have not the perfection of being mute. The great do what they like, the little what they can. Let the unknown pass unnoticed. Do not importune mythology. Do not interrogate appearances. Have a profound respect for idols. Do not let us direct our gossiping towards the lessenings and increasings which take place in superior regions, of the motives of which we are ignorant. Such things are mostly optical delusions to us inferior creatures. Metamorphoses are the business of the gods: the transformations and the contingent disorders of great persons who float above us are clouds impossible to comprehend, and perilous to study. Too much attention irritates the Olympians engaged in their gyrations of amusement or fancy; and a thunder-bolt may teach you that the bull you are too

curiously examining is Jupiter. Do not lift the folds of the stone colored mantels of those terrible powers. Indifference is intelligence. Do not stir and you will be safe. Feign death, and they will not kill you. Therein lies the wisdom of the insects. Ursus practised it.

The tavern-keeper, who was puzzled as well, questioned Ursus one day.

"Do you observe that Tom-Jim-Jack never comes here now !"

"Indeed," said Ursus. "I had not remarked it."

Master Nicless made an observation in an under tone, no doubt touching the intimacy between the ducal carriage and Tom-Jim-Jack ; a remark which, as it might have been irreverent and dangerous, Ursus took care not to hear.

Still Ursus was too much of an artist not to regret Tom-Jim-Jack. He felt some disappointment. He told his feelings to Homo, of whose discretion alone he felt certain. He whispered into the ear of the wolf, "Since Tom-Jim-Jack ceased to come, I feel a blank as a man, and a chill as a poet." This pouring out of his heart to a friend relieved Ursus.

His lips were sealed before Gwynplaine, who however, made no allusion to Tom-Jim-Jack. The fact was that Tom-Jim-Jack's presence or absence mattered not to Gwynplaine, absorbed as he was in Dea.

Forgetfulness fell more and more on Gwynplaine. As for Dea, she had not even suspected the existence of a vague trouble. At the same, no more cabals or complaints against the Laughing Man were spoken of. Hate seemed to have let go its hold. All was tranquil in and around the Green Box. No more opposition from strollers, merry-andrews, nor priests ; no more grumbling outside. Their success was unclouded. Destiny allows of such sudden serenity. The brilliant happiness of Gwynplaine and Dea was for the present absolutely cloudless. Little by little it had risen to a degree which admitted of no increase. There is one word which expresses the situation: apogee. Happiness, like the sea, has its high tide. The worst thing for the perfectly happy, is that it recedes.

There are two ways of being inaccessible; being too high and being too low. At least as much, perhaps, as the first, is the second

to be desired. More surely than the eagle escapes the arrow, the animalcule escapes being crushed. This security of insignificance, if it had ever existed on earth, was enjoyed by Gwynplaine and Dea, and never before had it been so complete. They lived on, daily more and more ecstatically wrapt in each other. The heart saturates itself with love as with a divine salt that preserves it, and from this arises the incorruptible constancy of those who have loved each other from the dawn of their lives, and the affection which keeps its freshness in old age. There is such a thing as the embalmment of the heart. It is of Daphnis and Chloë that Philemon and Baucis are made. The old age, of which we speak, evening resembling morning, was evidently reserved for Gwynplaine and Dea. In the meantime they were young.

Ursus looked on this love as a doctor examines his case. He had what was in those days termed a hippocratical expression of face. He fixed his sagacious eyes on Dea, fragile and pale, and growled out, "It is lucky that she is happy." At other times he said, "She is lucky for her health's sake." He shook his head, and at times read attentively a portion treating of heart disease in Avicennas, translated by Vossiscus Fortunatus, Louvain, 1650, an old worm-eaten book of his.

Dea, when fatigued, suffered from perspirations and drowsiness, and took a daily *siesta*, as we have already seen. One day, while she was lying asleep on the bearskin, Gwynplaine was out, and Ursus bent down softly and applied his ear to Dea's heart. He seemed to listen for a few minutes, and then stood up, murmuring, "She must not have any shock. It would find out the weak place."

The crowd continued to flock to the performance of "Chaos Vanquished." The success of the Laughing Man seemed inexhaustible. Everyone rushed to see him; no longer from Southwark only, but even from other parts of London. The general public began to mingle with the usual audience, which no longer consisted of sailors and drivers only; in the opinion of Master Nicless, who was well acquainted with crowds, there were in the crowd gentlemen and baronets disguised as common people. Disguise is one of the pleasures of pride, and was much in fashion at that period. This mixing of the aristocratic element with the mob was a good sign, and

showed that their popularity was extending to London. The fame of Gwynplaine has decidedly penetrated into the great world. Such was the fact. Nothing was talked of but the Laughing Man. He was talked about even at the Mohawk Club, frequented by nobleman.

In the Green Box they had no idea of all this. They were content to be happy. It was intoxication to Dea to feel, as she did every evening, the crisp and tawny head of Gwynplaine. In love there is nothing like habit. The whole of life is concentrated in it. The reappearance of the stars is the custom of the universe. Creation is nothing but a mistress, and the sun is a lover. Light is a dazzling caryatide supporting the world. Each day, for a sublime minute, the earth covered by night, rests on the rising sun. Dea, blind, felt a like return of warmth and hope within her when she placed her hand on the head of Gwynplaine.

To adore each other in the shadows, to love in the plenitude of silence; who could not become reconciled to such an eternity.

One evening Gwynplaine, feeling within him that overflow of felicity, which, like the intoxication of perfumes, causes a sort of delicious faintness, was strolling, as he usually did after the performance, in the meadow some hundred paces from the Green Box. Sometimes in those high tides of feeling in our souls we feel that we would fain pour out the sensations of the overflowing heart. The night was dark but clear. The stars were shining. The whole fair ground was deserted. Sleep and forgetfulness reigned in the caravans which were scattered over Tarrinzeau Field.

One light alone was unextinguished. It was the lamp of the Tadcaster Inn, the door of which was left ajar to admit Gwynplaine on his return.

Midnight had just struck in the five parishes of Southwark, with the breaks and differences of tone of their various bells. Gwynplaine was dreaming of Dea. Of whom else should he dream? But that evening, feeling singularly troubled, and full of a charm which was at the same time a pang, he thought of Dea as a man thinks of a woman. He reproached himself for this. He seemed to be failing in respect to her. The husband's attack was forming dimly within him. Sweet and imperious impatience! He was



crossing the invisible frontier, on this side of which is the virgin, on the other, the wife. He questioned himself anxiously. A blush, as it were, overspread his mind. The Gwynplaine of long ago had been transformed, by degrees, unconsciously in a mysterious growth. His old modesty was becoming misty and uneasy. We have an ear of light, into which speaks the spirit; and an ear of darkness, into which speaks the instinct. Into the latter strange voices were making their proposals. However pure-minded may be the youth who dreams of love, a certain grossness of the flesh eventually comes between his dream and him. Intentions lose their transparency. The unavowed desire implanted by nature enters into his conscience. Gwynplaine felt an indescribable yearning of the flesh, which abounds in all temptation, and Dea was scarcely flesh. In this fever, which he knew to be unhealthy, he transfigured Dea into a more material aspect, and tried to exaggerate her seraphic form into feminine loveliness. It is thou, O woman, that we require.

Love comes not to permit too much of paradise. It requires the fevered skin, the troubled life, the unbound hair, the kiss electrical and irreparable, the clasp of desire. The sidereal is embarrassing, the ethereal is heavy. Too much of the heavenly in love is like too much fuel on a fire: the flame suffers from it. Gwynplaine fell into an exquisite nightmare; Dea to be clasped in his arms—Dea clasped in them! He heard nature in his heart crying out for a Woman. Like a Pygmalion in a dream modelling a Galatea out of the azure, in the depths of his soul he worked at the chaste contour of Dea; a contour with too much of heaven, too little of Eden. For Eden is Eve, and Eve was a female, a carnal mother, a terrestrial nurse; the sacred womb of generations; the breast of unfailing milk; the rocker of the cradle of the new-born world, and wings are incompatible with the bosom of woman. Virginity is but the hope of maternity. Still, in Gwynplaine's dreams, Dea, until now, had been enthroned above flesh. Now, however, he made wild efforts in thought to draw her downwards by that thread, sex, which ties every girl to earth. Not one of those birds is free. Dea, like all the rest, was within this law; and Gwynplaine, though he scarcely acknowledged it, felt a vague desire that she

should submit to it. This desire possessed him in spite of himself, and with an ever-recurring relapse. He pictured Dea as woman. He came to the point of regarding her under a hitherto unheard-of form; as a creature no longer of ecstasy only, but of voluptuousness; as Dea, with her head resting on the pillow. He was ashamed of this visionary desecration. It was like an attempt at profanation. He resisted its assault. He turned from it, but it returned again. He felt as if he were committing a criminal assault. To him, Dea was encompassed by a cloud. Cleaving that cloud, he shuddered, as though he were raising her chemise. It was in April. The spine has its dreams. He rambled at random with the uncertain step caused by solitude. To have no one by is a provocative to wander. Whither flew his thoughts? He would not have dared to own it to himself. To heaven? No. To a bed. You were looking down upon him, O ye stars.

Why talk of a man in love? Rather say a man possessed. To be possessed by the devil, is the exception; to be possessed by a woman, the rule. Every man has to bear his alienation of himself. What a sorceress is a pretty woman! The true name of love is captivity.

Man is made prisoner by the soul of a woman. By her flesh as well, and sometimes even more by the flesh than by the soul. The soul is the true-love, the flesh the mistress.

We slander the devil. It was not he who tempted Eve. It was Eve who tempted him. The woman began. Lucifer was passing by quietly. He perceived the woman, and became Satan.

The flesh is the cover of the unknown. It is provocative (which is strange) by its modesty. Nothing could be more distracting. It is full of shame the hussy!

It was the terrible love of the surface which was then agitating Gwynplaine, and holding him in his power. Fearful the moment in which man covets the nakedness of woman! What dark things lurk beneath the fairness of Venus?

Something within him was calling Dea aloud, Dea the maiden, Dea the other half of a man, Dea flesh and blood, Dea with uncovered bosom. That cry was almost driving away the angel. Mysterious crisis through which all love must pass and in which the

Ideal is in danger. Therein is the predestination of Creation. Moment of heavenly corruption! Gwynplaine's love of Dea was becoming nuptial. Virgin love is but a transition. The moment was come. Gwynplaine coveted the woman.

He coveted a woman!

Precipice of which one sees but the first gentle slope!

The indistinct summons of nature is inexorable. The whole of woman, what an abyss!

Luckily, there was no woman for Gwynplaine but Dea. The only one he desired. The only one who could desire him.

Gwynplaine felt that vague and mighty shudder which is the vital claim of infinity. Besides there was the aggravation of the spring. He was breathing the nameless odors of the starry darkness. He walked forward in a wild feeling of delight. The wandering perfumes of the rising sap, the heady irradiations which float in shadow, the distinct opening of nocturnal flowers, the complicity of little hidden nests, the murmurs of waters and of leaves, soft sighs rising from all things, the freshness, the warmth, and the mysterious awakening of April and May, is the vast diffusion of sex murmuring, in whispers, their proposals of voluptuousness, till the soul stammers in answer to the giddy provocation. The ideal no longer knows what it is saying.

Anyone observing Gwynplaine walk, would have said, "See!—a drunken man!"

He almost staggered under the weight of his own heart, of spring and of the night.

The solitude in the bowling-green was so peaceful that at times he spoke aloud. The consciousness that there is no listener induces speech.

He walked with slow steps, his head bent down, his hands behind him, the left hand in the right, the fingers open.

Suddenly he felt something slipped between his fingers.

He turned round quickly.

In his hand was a paper, and in front of him a man.

It was the man who coming behind him with the stealth of a cat, had placed the paper in his fingers.

The paper was a letter.

The man, as he appeared pretty clearly in the starlight, was small, chubby-cheeked, young, sedate, and dressed in a scarlet livery

exposed from top to toe through the opening of a long grey cloak, then called a capenoeche, a Spanish word contracted; in French it was *cape-de-nuit*. His head was covered by a crimson cap, like the skull cap of a cardinal, on which servitude was indicated by a strip of lace. On this cap was a plume of tisserin feathers. He stood motionless before Gwynplaine, like a dark outline in a dream.

Gwynplaine recognized the duchess's page.

Before Gwynplaine could utter an exclamation of surprise, he heard the thin voice of the page, at once childlike and feminine in its tone, saying to him,—

"At this hour to-morrow, be at the corner of London Bridge. I will be there to conduct you—"

"Whither?" demanded Gwynplaine.

"Where you are expected?"

Gwynplaine dropped his eyes on the letter, which he was holding mechanically in his hand.

When he looked up the page was no longer with him.

He perceived a vague form lessening rapidly in the distance. It was the little valet. He turned the corner of the street, and solitude reigned again.

Gwynplaine saw the page vanish, then looked at the letter. There are moments in our lives when what happens seems not to happen. Stupor keeps us for a moment at a distance from the fact.

Gwynplaine raised the letter to his eyes, as if to read it, but soon perceived that he could not do so for two reasons—first, because he had not broken the seal; and, secondly, because it was too dark.

It was some minutes before he remembered that there was a lamp at the inn. He took a few steps sideways, as if he knew not whither he was going.

A somnambulist, to whom a phantom had given a letter, might walk as he did.

At last he made up his mind. He ran, rather than walked towards the inn, stood in the light which broke through the half-open door, and by it again examined the closed letter. There was no design on the seal, and on the envelope was written, "*To Gwynplaine.*" He broke the seal, tore the envelope, unfolded the letter, put it directly under the light, and read as follows:—

"You are hideous; I am beautiful. You

are a player; I am a duchess. I am the highest; you are the lowest. I desire you! I love you! Come!

## BOOK THE FOURTH.

### THE CELL OF TORTURE.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE TEMPTATION OF ST. GWYNPLAINE.

ONE jet of flame hardly makes a prick in the darkness: another sets fire to a volcano. Some sparks are gigantic.

Gwynplaine read the letter, then he read it over again. Yes, the words were there, "I love you!"

Terrors chased each other through his mind.

The first was that he believed himself to be mad.

He was mad; that was certain. He had just seen what had no existence. The twilight spectres were making game of him, poor wretch! The little man in scarlet was the will-o'-the-wisp of a dream. Sometimes, at night, nothings condensed into flame come and laugh at us. Having had his laugh out, the visionary being had disappeared, and left Gwynplaine behind him, mad.

Such are the freaks of darkness.

The second terror was to find out that he was in his right senses.

A vision? Certainly not. How could that be? had he not a letter in his hand? Did he not see an envelope, a seal, paper, and writing? Did he not know from whom that came? It was all clear enough. Someone took a pen and ink, and wrote. Someone took a pen and ink, and wrote. Someone lighted a taper, and sealed it with wax. Was not his name written on the letter,—"*To Gwynplaine?*" The paper was scented. All was clear.

Gwynplaine knew the little man. The dwarf was a page. The gleam was a livery. The page had given him a rendezvous for the same hour on the morrow, at the corner of London Bridge.

Was London Bridge an illusion?

No, no. All was clear. There was no delirium. All was reality. Gwynplaine was perfectly clear in his intellect. It was not a phantasmagoria, suddenly dissolving above

his head, and fading into nothingness. It was something which had really happened to him. No, Gwynplaine was not mad, nor was he dreaming. Again he read the letter.

Well; yes! But then?

That then, was terror-striking.

There was a woman who desired him! If so, let no one ever again pronounce the word incredible! A woman desire him! A woman who had seen his face! A woman who was not blind! And who was this woman? An ugly one? No; a beauty. A gypsy? No; a duchess!

What was it all about; and what could it all mean? What peril in such a triumph! And how was he to help plunging into it headlong?

What! that woman! The syren, the apparition, the lady in the visionary box, the light in the darkness! It was she. Yes; it was she!

The crackling of the fire burst out in every part of his frame. It was the strange, unknown lady, she who had previously so troubled his thoughts; and his first tumultuous feelings about this woman returned, heated by the evil fire. Forgetfulness is nothing but a palimpsest: an incident happens unexpectedly, and all that was effaced revives in the blanks of wondering memory.

Gwynplaine thought that he had dismissed that image from his remembrance, and he found that it was still there; and she had put her mark in his brain, unconsciously guilty of a dream. Without his suspecting it the lines of the engraving had been bitten deep by reverie. And now a certain amount of evil had been done, and this train of thought thenceforth, perhaps, irreparable, he took up again eagerly. What, she desired him! What! the princess descend from her throne, the idol from its shrine, the statue from its pedestal, the phantom from its cloud! What! from the depths of the impossible had this chimera come! This deity of the sky! This irradiation! This nereid all glistening with jewels! This proud and unattainable beauty, from the height of her radiant throne, was bending down to Gwynplaine! What! had she drawn up her chariot of the dawn, with it yoke of turtle-doves and dragons, before Gwynplaine, and said to him, "Come!" What, this terrible glory of being the object of such abasement from the empyrean, for Gwynplaine! This woman, if he

could give that name to a form so starlike and majestic, this woman proposed herself, gave herself, delivered herself up to him! Wonder of wonders! A goddess prostituting herself for him! The arms of a cortezan opening in a cloud to clasp him to the bosom of a goddess, and that without degradation! Such majestic creatures cannot be sullied. The gods bathe themselves pure in light; and this goddess who came to him knew what she was doing. She was not ignorant of the incarnate hideousness of Gwynplaine. She had seen the mask which was his face; and that mask had not caused her to draw back. Gwynplaine was loved notwithstanding it!

Here was a thing surpassing all the extravagance of dreams. He was loved in consequence of his mask. Far from repulsing the goddess, the mask attracted her. Gwynplaine was not only loved, he was desired. He was more than accepted, he was chosen. He, chosen!

What! there, where this woman dwelt, in the regal region of irresponsible splendor, and in the power of full, free will; where there were princes, and she could take a prince; nobles, and she could take a noble; where there were men handsome, charming, magnificent, and she could take an Adonis: whom did she take? Gnafron! She could choose from the midst of meteors and thunders, the mighty six-winged seraphim, and she chose the larva crawling in the slime. On one side were highnesses and peers, all grandeur, all opulence, all glory. On the other, a mountebank. The mountebank carried it! What kind of scales could their be in the heart of this woman? By what measure did she weigh her love? She took off her ducal coronet, and flung it on the platform of a clown! She took from her brow the Olympian aureola, and placed it on the bristly head of a gnome! The world had turned topsy-turvy. The insects swarmed on high, the stars were scattered below, whilst the wonder stricken Gwynplaine, overwhelmed by a falling ruin of light and lying in the dust, was enshrined in a glory. One all-powerful, revolting against beauty and splendor, gave herself to the damned of night; preferred Gwynplaine to Antinoüs; excited by curiosity, she entered the shadows, descending within them, and from this abdication of goddess-ship was rising, crowned

and prodigious, the royalty of the wretched. "You are hideous, I love you." These words touched Gwynplaine in the ugly spot of pride. Pride is the heel in which all heroes are vulnerable. Gwynplaine was flattered in his vanity as a monster. He was loved for his deformity. He, too, was the Exception, as much, and perhaps more than the Jupiters and the Apollos. He felt superhuman, and so much a monster as to be a god. Fearful bewilderment!

Now, who was this woman? What did he know about her? Everything and nothing. She was a duchess, that he knew? he knew, also, that she was beautiful and rich; that she had liveries, lackeys, pages, and footmen running with torches by the side of her coroneted carriage. He knew that she was in love with him; at least she said so. Of everything else he was ignorant. He knew her title; but not her name. He knew her thought; he knew not her life. Was she married, widow, maiden? Was she free? Of what family was she? Were there snares, traps, dangers about her? Of the gallantry existing on the idle heights of society; the caves on those summits, in which savage charmers dream amid the scattered skeletons of the loves which they have already preyed on; of the extent of tragic cynicism to which the experiments of a woman may attain, who believes herself to be beyond the reach of man; of things such as these Gwynplaine had no idea. Nor had he even in his mind materials out of which to build up a conjecture, information concerning such things being very scanty in the social depths in which he lived. Still he detected a shadow; he felt that a mist hung over all this brightness. Did he understand it? No. Could he guess at it? Still less. What was there behind that letter? One pair of folding-doors opening before him, another closing on him, and causing him a vague anxiety. On the one side an avowal; on the other an enigma. Avowal and enigma, which, like two mouths, one tempting, the other threatening, pronounce the same word, Dare!

Never had perfidious chance taken its measures better, nor timed more fitly the moment of temptation. Gwynplaine, stirred by spring, and by the sap rising in all things, was prompt to dream out the dream of the flesh. The old man who is not to be stamped out,

and over whom none of us can triumph, was awaking in that backward youth, still a boy at twenty-four.

It was just then, at the most stormy moment of the crisis, that the offer was made him, and the naked bosom of the Sphinx appeared before his dazzled eyes. Youth is an inclined plane. Gwynplaine was stooping and something pushed him forward. What? the season and the night. Who? the woman.

Were there no month of April, man would be a great deal more virtuous. The budding plants are a set of accomplices! Love is the thief, Spring the receiver.

Gwynplaine was shaken.

There is a kind of smoke of evil, preceding sin, in which the conscience cannot breathe. The obscure nausea of hell comes over virtue in temptation. The yawning abyss discharges an exhalation which warns the strong, and turns the weak giddy. Gwynplaine was suffering its mysterious attack.

Dilemmas, transient and at the same time stubborn, were floating before him. Sin, presenting itself obstinately again and again to his mind was taking form. The morrow, midnight? London Bridge, the page? Should he go? "Yes," cried the flesh; "no," cried the soul.

Nevertheless, we must remark that, strange as it may appear at first sight, he never once put himself the question: "Should he go?" quite distinctly. Reprehensible actions are like over-strong brandies; you cannot swallow them at a draught. You put down your glass; you will see to it presently; there is a strange taste even about that first drop. One thing is certain; he felt something behind him pushing him forward towards the unknown. And he trembled. He could catch a glimpse of a crumbling precipice, and he drew back, stricken by the terror encircling him. He closed his eyes. He tried hard to deny to himself that the adventure had ever occurred, and to persuade himself into doubting his reason. This was evidently his best plan; the wisest thing he could do was to believe himself mad.

Fatal fever! Every man, surprised by the unexpected, has at times felt the throb of such tragic pulsations. The observer ever listens with anxiety to the echoes resounding from the dull strokes of the battering-ram of destiny striking against a conscience.

Alas! Gwynplaine put himself questions.

Where duty is clear, to put one's self questions is to suffer defeat.

One detail, however, is noteworthy; the effrontery of the adventure, which might, perhaps, have shocked a depraved man, never struck him. He was utterly unconscious of what cynicism is composed. He had no idea of prostitution as referred to above. He had not the power to conceive it. He was too pure to admit complicated hypotheses. He saw but the grandeur of the woman. Alas! he felt flattered. His vanity assured him of victory only. To dream that he was the object of unchaste desire, rather than of love, would have required much greater wit than innocence possesses. Close to *I love you*, he could not perceive the frightful corrective, *I desire you*. He could not grasp the animal side of the goddess's nature.

There are invasions which the mind may have to suffer. There are the Vandals of the soul, evil thoughts coming to devastate our virtue. A thousand contrary ideas rushed into Gwynplaine's brain, now following each other singly, now crowding together. Then silence reigned again, and he would lean his head on his hands, in a kind of mournful attention, as of one who contemplates a landscape by night.

Suddenly he felt that he was no longer thinking. His reverie had reached that point of utter darkness in which all things disappear.

He remembered, too, that he had not entered the inn. It might be about 2 o'clock in the morning.

He placed the letter which the page had brought him in his side-pocket, but perceiving that it was next his heart, he drew it out again, crumpled it up, and placed it in a pocket of his hose. He then directed his steps towards the inn, which he entered stealthily, and without awaking little Govicum, who, while waiting up for him, had fallen asleep on the table, with his arms for a pillow. He closed the door, lighted a candle at the lamp, fastened the bolt, turned the key in the lock, taking, mechanically, all the precautions usual to a man returning home late, ascended the staircase of the Green Box slipped into the old hovel which he used as a bedroom, looked at Ursus who was asleep, blew out his candle, and did not go to bed.

Thus an hour passed away. Weary, at length, and fancying that bed and sleep were

one, he laid his head upon the pillow without undressing, making darkness the concession of closing his eyes. But the storm of emotions which assailed him had not waned for an instant. Sleeplessness is a cruelty which night inflicts on man. Gwynplaine suffered greatly. For the first time in his life, he was not pleased with himself. Ache of heart mingled with gratified vanity. What was he to do? Day broke at last; he heard Ursus get up, but did not raise his eyelids. No truce for him, however. The letter was ever in his mind. Every word of it came back to him in a kind of chaos. In certain violent storms within the soul, thought becomes a liquid. It is convulsed, it heaves, and something rises from it, like the dull roaring of the waves. Flood and flow, sudden shocks and whirls, the hesitation of the wave before the rock; hail and rain; clouds with the light shining through their breaks; the pretty flights of useless foam; the wild swell broken in an instant; great efforts lost; wreck appearing all around; darkness and universal dispersion; as these things are of the sea, so are they of man. Gwynplaine was a prey to such a storm.

At the acme of his agony, his eyes still closed, he heard an exquisite voice saying, "Are you asleep, Gwynplaine?" He opened his eyes with a start, and sat up. Dea was standing in the half-open doorway. Her ineffable smile was in her eyes and on her lips. She was standing there, charming in the unconscious serenity of her radiance. Then came, as it were, a sacred moment. Gwynplaine watched her, startled, dazzled, awakened. Awakened from what? from sleep? no, from sleeplessness. It was she, it was Dea; and suddenly he felt in the depths of his being the indescribable wane of the storm and the sublime descent of good over evil; the miracle of the look from on high was accomplished; the blind girl, the sweet light-bearer, with no effort beyond her mere presence, dissipated all the darkness within him; the curtain of cloud was dispersed from his soul as if drawn by an invisible hand, and a sky of azure, as though by celestial enchantment, again spread over Gwynplaine's conscience. In a moment he became by the virtue of that angel, the great and good Gwynplaine, the innocent man. Such mysterious confrontations occur to the soul as they do to creation. Both were silent; she, who was the light;

he, who was the abyss; she, who was divine; he, who was appeased; and over Gwynplaine's stormy heart Dea shone with the indescribable effect of a star shining on the sea.

## CHAPTER II.

### FROM GAY TO GRAVE.

How simple is a miracle! It was breakfast hour in the Green Box, and Dea had merely come to see why Gwynplaine had not joined their little breakfast table.

"It is you!" exclaimed Gwynplaine, and he had said everything. There was no other horizon, no vision for him now but the heaven where Dea was. His mind was appeased; appeased in such a manner as he alone can understand, who has seen the smile spread swiftly over the sea when the hurricane has passed away. Over nothing does the calm come so quickly as over the whirlpool. This results from its power of absorption. And so it is with the human heart. Not always, however.

Dea had but to show herself, and all the light that was in Gwynplaine left him and went to her, and behind the dazzled Gwynplaine there was but a flight of phantoms. What a peacemaker is adoration! A few minutes afterward they were sitting opposite each other, Ursus between them, Homo at their feet. The teapot, hung over a little lamp, was on the table. Fibi and Vinos were outside, waiting.

They breakfasted as they supped, in the centre compartment. From the position in which the narrow table was placed, Dea's back was turned towards the aperture in the partition, which was opposite the entrance door of the Green Box. Their knees were touching. Gwynplaine was pouring out tea for Dea. Dea blew gracefully on her cup. Suddenly she sneezed. Just at that moment a thin smoke rose above the flame of the lamp, and something like a piece of paper fell into ashes. It was the smoke which had caused Dea to sneeze.

"What was that?" she asked.

"Nothing," replied Gwynplaine.

And he smiled. He had just burnt the duchess's letter.

The conscience of the man who loves, is the guardian angel of the woman whom he loves.

Unburthened of the letter, his relief was wondrous, and Gwynplaine felt his integrity as the eagle feels its wings.

It seemed to him as if his temptation had evaporated with the smoke, and as if the duchess had crumbled into ashes with the paper.

Taking up their cups at random, and drinking one after the other from the same one, they talked. A babble of lovers, a chattering of sparrows! Child's talk, worthy of Mother Goose, or of Homer! With two loving hearts, go no further for poetry: with two kisses for dialogue, go no further for music.

"Do you know something?"

"No."

"Gwynplaine, I dreamt that we were animals, and had wings."

"Wings; that means birds," murmured Gwynplaine.

"Fools!" it means angels," growled Ursus.

And their talk went on.

"If you did not exist, Gwynplaine?"

"What then?"

"It could only be because there was no God."

"The tea is too hot; you will burn yourself, Dea."

"Blow on my cup."

"How beautiful you are this morning."

"Do you know that I have a great many things to say to you?"

"Say them."

"I love you."

"I adore you."

And Ursus said aside, "By heaven, they are polite!"

Exquisite to lovers are their moments of silence! In them they gather, as it were, masses of love, which afterwards explode into sweet fragments.

"Do you know! In the evening, when we are playing our parts, at the moment when my hand touches your forehead—oh, what a noble head is yours, Gwynplaine!—at the moment when I feel your hair under my fingers, I shiver; a heavenly joy comes over me, and I say to myself, In all this world of darkness which encompasses me, in this universe of solitude, in this great obscurity of ruin in which I am, in this quaking fear of myself and of everything, I have one prop; and he is there. It is he. It is you."

"Oh! you love me," said Gwynplaine. "I, too, have but you on earth. You are all in all to me. Dea, what would you have me do? What do you desire? What do you want?"

Dea answered,—

"I do not know. I am happy."

"Oh," replied Gwynplaine, "we are happy."

Ursus raised his voice severely,—

"Oh, you are happy, are you? That's a crime. I have warned you already. You are happy! Then take care you aren't seen. Take up as little room as you can. Happiness ought to stuff itself into a hole. Make yourselves still less than you are, if that can be. God measures the greatness of happiness by the littleness of the happy. The happy should conceal themselves like malefactors. Oh, only shine out like the wretched glowworms that you are, and you'll be trodden on; and quite right, too! What do you mean by all that love-making nonsense? I'm no duenna, whose business it is to watch lovers billing and cooing. I'm tired of it all, I tell you; and you may both go to the devil."

And, feeling that his harsh tones were melting into tenderness, he drowned his emotion in a loud grumble.

"Father," said Dea, "how roughly you scold."

"It's because I don't like to see people too happy."

Here Homo re-echoed Ursus. His growl was heard from beneath the lovers' feet.

Ursus stooped down, and placed his hand on Homo's head.

"That's right; you're in bad humor, too. You growl. The bristles are all on end on your wolf's pate. You don't like all this love-making. That's because you are wise. Hold your tongue all the same. You have had your say, and given your opinion; be it so. Now be silent.

The wolf growled again. Ursus looked under the table at him.

"Be still, Homo! Come, don't dwell on it, you philosopher!"

But the wolf sat up, and looked towards the door, showing his teeth.

"What's wrong with you now?" said Ursus. And he caught hold of Homo by the skin of the neck.

Heedless of the wolf's growls, and wholly wrapped up in her own thoughts, and in the

sound of Gwynplaine's voice, which left its after-taste within her, Dea was silent, and absorbed by that kind of ecstasy peculiar to the blind, which seems at times to give them a song to listen to in their souls, and to make up to them for the light which they lack, by some strain of ideal music. Blindness is a cavern, to which reaches the deep harmony of the Eternal.

While Ursus, addressing Homo, was looking down, Gwynplaine had raised his eyes. He was about to drink a cup of tea, but did not drink it. He placed it on the table with the slow movement of a spring drawn back; his fingers remained open, his eyes fixed. Ha scarcely breathed.

A man was standing in the doorway, behind Dea. He was clad in black, with a hood. He wore a wig down to his eyebrows, and held in his hand an iron staff with a crown at each end. His staff was short and massive. He was like Medusa thrusting her head between two branches in Paradise,

Ursus, who had heard some one enter and raised his head without loosing his hold of Homo, recognized the terrible personage. He shook from head to foot, and whispered to Gwynplaine,—

“It's the wapentake.”

Gwynplaine recollected. An exclamation of surprise was about to escape him, but he restrained it. The iron staff, with the crown at each end, was called the iron weapon. It was from this iron weapon, upon which the city officers of justice took the oath when they entered on their duties, that the old wapentakes of the English police derived their qualification.

Behind the man in the wig, the frightened landlord could just be perceived in the shadow.

Without saying a word, a personification of the *muta Themis* of the old charters, the man stretched his right arm over the radiant Dea, and touched Gwynplaine on the shoulder with the iron staff, at the same time pointing with his left thumb to the door of the Green Box behind him. These gestures, all the more imperious for their silence, meant, follow me.

“*Pro signo exeunidi sursum trahe,*” says the old Norman record.

He who was touched by the iron weapon had no right but the right of obedience. To that mute order there was no reply. The

harsh penalties of the English law threatened the refractory. Gwynplaine felt a shock under the rigid touch of the law; then he sat as though petrified.

If, instead of having been merely grazed on the shoulder, he had been struck a violent blow on the head with the iron staff, he could not have been more stunned. He knew that the police officer summoned him to follow; but why? *That* he could not understand.

On his part Ursus, too, was thrown into the most painful agitation, but he saw through matters pretty distinctly. His thoughts ran on the jugglers and preachers, his competitors, on informations laid against the Green Box, on that delinquent the wolf, on his own affair with the three Bishopsgate commissioners, and who knows?—perhaps—but that would be too fearful—Gwynplaine's unbecoming and factious speeches touching the royal authority.

He trembled violently.

Dea was smiling.

Neither Gwynplaine nor Ursus pronounced a word. They had both the same thought: not to frighten Dea. It may have struck the wolf as well, for he ceased growling. True, Ursus did not loose him.

Homo; however, was a prudent wolf when occasion required. Who is there who has not remarked a kind of intelligent anxiety in animals? It may be that to the extent to which a wolf can understand mankind he felt that he was an outlaw.

Gwynplaine rose

Resistance was impracticable, as Gwynplaine knew. He remembered Ursus's words, and there was no question possible. He remained standing in front of the wapentake. The latter raised the iron staff from Gwynplaine's shoulder, and drawing it back, held it out straight in an attitude of command: a constable's attitude which was understood in those days by the whole people, and which expressed the following order:—“Let this man, and no other follow me. The rest remain where they are. Silence!”

No curious followers were allowed. In all times the police have had a taste for arrests of the kind. This description of seizure was termed sequestration of the person.

The wapentake turned round in one motion, like a piece of mechanism revolving on its own pivot, and with grave and magisterial



step proceeded towards the door of the Green Box.

Gwynplaine looked at Ursus. The latter went through a pantomime composed as follows : he shrugged his shoulders, placed both elbows close to his hips, with his hands out, and knitted his brows into chevrons, all of which signifies,—we must submit to the unknown.

Gwynplaine looked at Dea. She was in her dream. She was still smiling. He put the ends of his fingers to his lips, and sent her an unutterable kiss.

Ursus, relieved some portion of his terror now that the wapentake's back was turned, seized the moment to whisper in Gwynplaine's ear—

“On your life, do not speak until you are questioned.”

Gwynplaine, with the same care to make no noise as he would have taken in a sick room, took his hat and cloak from the hook on the partition, wrapped himself up to the eyes in the cloak, and pushed his hat over his forehead. Not having been to bed, he had his working clothes still on, and his leather esclavin round his neck. Once more he looked at Dea. Having reached the door, the wapentake raised his staff and began to descend the steps ; then Gwynplaine set out as if the man was dragging him by an invisible chain. Ursus watched Gwynplaine leave the Green Box. At that moment the wolf gave a low growl, but Ursus silenced him and whispered, “He is coming back.”

In the yard, Master Nicless was stemming, with servile and imperious gestures, the cries of terror raised by Vinos and Fibi, as in great distress they watched Gwynplaine led away, and the mourning-colored garb and the iron staff of the wapentake.

The two girls were like petrifications ; they were in the attitude of stalactites. Govicum, stunned, was looking open-mouthed out of a window.

The wapentake preceded Gwynplaine by a few steps, never turning round or looking at him, in that icy ease which is given by the knowledge that one is the law.

In the death-like silence they both crossed the yard, went through the dark tap-room, and reached the street. A few passers-by had collected about the inn door, and the justice of the quorum was there at the head of a squad of police. The idlers, stupefied, and

without breathing a word, opened out and stood aside, with English discipline, at the sight of the constable's staff. The wapentake moved off in the direction of the narrow street then called the Little Strand, running by the Thames ; and Gwynplaine, with the justice of the quorum's men in ranks on each side, like a double hedge, pale, without a motion except that of his steps, wrapped in his cloak as in a shroud, was leaving the inn further and further behind him as he followed the silent man, like a statue following a spectre.

### CHAPTER III.

LEX, REX, FEX.

UNEXPLAINED arrest, which would greatly astonish an Englishman nowadays, was then a very usual proceeding of the police. Recourse was had to it, notwithstanding the Habeas Corpus act, up to George II.'s time, especially in such delicate cases as were provided for by *tettres de cachet* in France ; and one of the accusations against which Walpole had to defend himself was that he had caused or allowed Neuhoﬀ to be arrested in that manner. The accusation was probably without foundation, for Neuhoﬀ, King of Corsica, was put in prison by his creditors.

These silent captures of the person, very usual with the Holy Væhme in Germany, were admitted by German custom, which rules one half of the old English law, and recommended in certain cases by the Norman custom, which rules the other half. Justinian's chief of the palace police was called “*Silentarius Imperialis*.” The English magistrates who practised the captures in question relied upon the numerous Norman texts :—*Canes latrant, sergentes silent. Sergenter agere, id est tacere*. They quoted Lundolphus Sagax, paragraph 16 : *Facit imparator silentium*. They quoted the charter of King Philip in 1307 : *Multos tenebimus bastoneros qui obmutescentes, sergentare valent*. They quoted the statutes of Henry I. of England, cap. 53, *Surge signo jusens. Taciturnior esto. Hoc est esse in captione regis*. They took advantage especially of the following prescription, held to form part of the ancient feudal franchises of England : “*Sous les viscomtes sont les serjans de l'espée, lesquels doivent justicier vertueusement à*

l'espée tous ceux qui suient malveses compagnies, gens diffamez d'aucuns crimes, et gens fuites et forbannis...et les doivent si vigoureusement et discrètement appréhender, que la bonne gent qui sont paisibles soient gardez paisiblement et que les malfeteurs soient espoantes." To be thus arrested was to be seized "à le glaive de l'espée." (*Vetus Consuetudo Normanniæ*; MS. part 1, sect. i, ch. ii.) The jurisconsults referred besides "*in Charta Ludovici Hutuni pro Normanis*," chapter *Servientes spathæ. Sevvientes spathæ*, in the gradual approach of base Latin to our idioms, became *sergentes spadæ*.

These silent arrests were the contrary of the *Clameur de Haro*, and gave warning that it was advisable to hold one's tongue until such time as light should be thrown upon certain matters still in the dark. They signified questions reserved, and showed in the operation of the police a certain amount of *raison d'état*.

The legal term "private" was supplied to arrests of this description. It was thus that Edward III., according to some chroniclers, caused Mortimer to be seized in the bed of his mother, Isabella of France. This again, we may take leave to doubt; for Mortimer sustained a siege in his town before being captured.

Warwick, the king-maker, delighted in practising this mode of "attaching people." Cromwell made use of it, especially in Connaught; and it was with this precaution of silence that Trailie Arcklo, a relation of the Earl of Ormond, was arrested at Kilmaccaugh.

These captures of the body by the mere motion of justice, represented rather the *mandat de comparation* than the warrant of arrest. Sometimes they were but processes of inquiry, and even argued, by the silence imposed upon all, a certain consideration for the person seized. For the mass of the people, little versed as they were in the estimate of such shades of difference, they had peculiar terrors.

It must not be forgotten that in 1705, and even much later, England was far from being what she is to-day. The general features of its constitution were confused, and at times, very oppressive. Daniel Defoe, who had himself had a taste of the pillory, characterizes the social order of England, somewhere in his writings, as the "iron hands of the law." There was not only the law, there was its arbi-

trary administration. We have but to recall Steele, ejected from Parliament; Locke, driven from his chair; Hobbes and Gibbon, compelled to flight; Charles Churchill, Hume, and Priestley, persecuted; John Wilkes sent to the Tower. The task would be a long one, were we to count over the victims of the statute against seditious libel. The inquisition had, to some extent, spread its arrangements throughout Europe, and its police practice was taken as a guide. A monstrous attempt against all rights was possible in England. We have only to recall the *Gazetier Cuirassé*. In the midst of the eighteenth century, Louis XV. had writers, whose works displeased him, arrested in Piccadilly. It is true that George II. laid his hands on the Pretender in France, right in the middle of the hall at the opera. These were two long arms! that of the King of France reaching London! that of the King of England, Paris! Such was the liberty of the period.

We may add that they were fond of putting people to death privately in prisons, sleight of hand mingled with capital punishment; a hideous expedient, to which England is reverting at the present moment, thus giving to the world the strange spectacle of a great people, which in its desire to take the better part, chooses the worse; and which, having before it the past on one side and progress on the other, mistakes its way, and takes night for day.

## CHAPTER IV.

### URSUS SPIES THE POLICE.

As we have already said, according to the very severe laws of the police of those days, the summons to follow the wapentake addressed to an individual, implied to all other persons present, the command not to stir.

Some curious idlers, however, were stubborn, and followed from afar off the *cortège* which had taken Gwynplaine into custody.

Ursus was of them. He had been as nearly petrified as any one has a right to be. But Ursus, so often assailed by the surprises incident to a wandering life, and by the malice of chance, was, like a ship-of-war, prepared for action, and could call to the post of danger the whole crew—that is to say, the aid of all his intelligence.

He flung off his stupor, and began to

think. He strove not to give way to emotion, but to stand face to face with circumstances.

To look fortune in the face is the duty of everyone not an idiot; to seek not to understand, but to act.

Presently he asked himself,—What could he do?

Gwynplaine being taken, Ursus was placed between two terrors—a fear for Gwynplaine, which instigated him to follow; and a fear for himself, which urged him to remain where he was.

Ursus had the intrepidity of a fly, and the impassibility of a sensitive plant. His agitation was not to be described. However, he took his resolution heroically, and decided to brave the law, and to follow the wapentake, so anxious was he concerning the fate of Gwynplaine.

His terror must have been great to prompt so much courage.

To what valiant acts will not fear drive a hare!

The chamois in despair jumps a precipice. To be terrified into imprudence is one of the forms of fear.

Gwynplaine had been carried off rather than arrested. The operation of the police had been executed so rapidly that the Fair field, generally little frequented at that hour of the morning, had scarcely taken cognizance of the circumstance.

Scarcely any one in the caravans had any idea that the wapentake had come to take Gwynplaine. Hence, the smallness of the crowd.

Gwynplaine, thanks to his cloak and his hat, which nearly concealed his face, could not be recognized by the passers by.

Before he went out to follow Gwynplaine, Ursus took a precaution. He spoke to Master Nicless, to the boy Govieum, and to Fibi and Vinos, and insisted on their keeping absolute silence before Dea, who was ignorant of everything. That they should not utter a syllable that could make her suspect what had occurred; that they should make her understand that the cares of the management of the Green Box necessitated the absence of Gwynplaine and Ursus; that, besides, it would soon be the time of her daily siesta, and that before she awoke he and Gwynplaine would have returned; that all that had taken place had arisen from a mistake; that it

would be very easy for Gwynplaine and himself to clear themselves before the magistrate and police; that a touch of the finger would put the matter straight, after which they should both return; above all, that no one should say a word on the subject to Dea. Having given these directions he departed.

Ursus was able to follow Gwynplaine without being remarked. Though he kept at the greatest possible distance, he so managed as not to lose sight of him. Boldness in ambuscade is the bravery of the timid.

After all, notwithstanding the solemnity of the attendant circumstances, Gwynplaine might have been summoned before the magistrate for some unimportant infraction of the law.

Ursus assured himself that the question would be decided at once.

The solution of the mystery would be made under his very eyes by the direction taken by the *cortegé* which took Gwynplaine from Tarinzeau Field when it reached the entrance of the lanes of the Little Strand.

If it turned to the left, it would conduct Gwynplaine to the justice hall in Southwark. In that case there would be little to fear, some trifling municipal offence, an admonition from the magistrate, two or three shillings to pay, and Gwynplaine would be set at liberty, and the representation of "Chaos Vanquished" would take place in the evening as usual. In that case no one would know that anything unusual had happened.

If the *cortegé* turned to the right, matters would be serious.

There were frightful places in that direction.

When the wapentake, leading the file of soldiers between whom Gwynplaine walked, arrived at the small streets, Ursus watched them breathlessly. There are moments in which a man's whole being passes into his eyes.

Which way were they going to turn?

They turned to the right.

Ursus, staggering with terror, lent against a wall that he might not fall.

There is no hypocrisy so great as the words which we say to ourselves, "*I wish to know the worst!*" At heart we do not wish it at all. We have a dreadful fear of knowing it. Agony is mingled with a dim effort not to see the end. We do not own it to ourselves, but we would draw back if we dared; and when

we have advanced, we reproach ourselves for having done so.

Thus did Ursus. He shuddered as he thought,—

“Here are things going wrong. I should have found it out soon enough. What business had I to follow Gwynplaine?”

Having made this reflection, man being but self-contradiction, he increased his pace, and, mastering his anxiety, hastened to get nearer the *cortège*, so as not to break, in the maze of small streets, the thread between Gwynplaine and himself.

The *cortège* of police could not move quickly, on account of its solemnity.

The wapentake led it.

The justice of the quorum closed it.

This order compelled a certain deliberation of movement.

All the majesty possible in an official shone in the justice of the quorum. His costume held a middle place between the splendid robe of a doctor of music of Oxford, and the sober black habiliments of a doctor of divinity of Cambridge. He wore the dress of a gentleman under a long godebert, which is a mantle trimmed with the fur of the Norwegian hare. He was half gothic and half modern, wearing a wig like Lamoignon, and sleeves like Tristan l’Hermite. His great, round eye watched Gwynplaine with the fixedness of an owl’s.

He walked with a cadence. Never did honest man look fiercer.

Ursus, for a moment thrown out of his way in the tangled skein of streets, overtook, close to Saint Mary Overy, the *cortège*, which had fortunately been retarded in the churchyard by a fight between children and dogs, a common incident in the streets in those days. “*Dogs and boys*,” say the old registers of police, placing the dogs before the boys.

A man being taken before a magistrate by the police was, after all, an every-day affair, and each one having his own business to attend to, the few who had followed soon dispersed. There remained but Ursus on the track of Gwynplaine.

They passed before two chapels opposite to each other, belonging the one to the Recreative Religionists, the other to the Hallelujah League, sects which flourished then, and which exist to the present day.

Then the *cortège* wound from street to

street, making a zigzag, choosing by preference lanes not yet built on, roads where the grass grew, and deserted alleys.

At length it stopped.

• It was in a little lane with no houses except two or three hovels. This narrow alley was composed of two walls, one on the left, low; the other on the right, high. The high wall was black, and built in the Saxon style with narrow holes, scorpions, and large square gratings over narrow loop-holes. There was no window on it, but here and there slits, old embrasures of pierriers and archegays. At the foot of this high wall was seen, like the hole at the bottom of a rat-trap, a little wicket gate, very elliptical in its arch.

This small door, encased in a full, heavy girding of stone, had a grated peep-hole, a heavy knocker, a large lock, hinges thick and knotted, a bristling of nails, an armor of plates, and hinges, so that altogether it was more of iron than of wood.

There was no one in the lane. No shops, no passengers; but in it there was heard a continual noise, as if the lane ran parallel to a torrent. There was a tumult of voices and of carriages. It seemed as if on the other side of the black edifice there must be a great street, doubtless the principal street of Southwark, one end of which ran into the Canterbury road, and the other on to London Bridge.

All the length of the lane, except the *cortège* which surrounded Gwynplaine, a watcher would have seen no other human face than the pale profile of Ursus hazarding a half advance from the shadow of the corner of the wall; looking, yet fearing to see. He had posted himself behind the wall at a turn of the lane.

The constables grouped themselves before the wicket. Gwynplaine was in the centre, the wapentake and his baton of iron being now behind him.

The justice of the quorum raised the knocker, and struck the door three times. The loophole opened.

The justice of the quorum said,—

“By order of her Majesty.”

The heavy door of oak and iron turned on its hinges, making a chilly opening, like the mouth of a cavern. A hideous depth yawned in the shadow.

Ursus saw Gwynplaine disappear within it.

## CHAPTER V.

## A FEARFUL PLACE.

THE wapentake entered behind Gwynplaine.

Then the justice of the quorum.

Then the constables.

The wicket was closed.

The heavy door swung to, closing hermetically on the stone sills, without any one seeing who had opened or shut it. It seemed as if the bolts re-entered their sockets of their own act. Some of these mechanisms, the inventions of ancient intimidation, still exist in old prisons; doors of which you saw no doorkeeper. With them the entrance to a prison becomes like the entrance to a tomb.

This wicket was the lower door of Southwark Jail.

There was nothing in the harsh and worm-eaten aspect of this prison to soften its appropriate air of rigor.

Originally a pagan temple, built by the Catieuchlans for the Mogons, ancient English gods, it became a palace for Ethelwolfe and a fortress for Edward the Confessor; then it was elevated to the dignity of a prison, in 1199, by John Lackland. Such was Southwark Jail. This jail, at first intersected by a street, like Chenonceaux, by a river, had been for a century or two a gate, that is to say, the gate of the suburb; the passage had then been walled up. There remain in England some prisons of this nature. In London, Newgate; at Canterbury, Westgate; at Edinburgh, Canongate. In France the Bastille was originally a gate.

Almost all the jails of England present the same appearance—a high wall without and a hive of cells within. Nothing could be more funereal than the appearance of those prisons, where spiders and justice spread their webs, and where John Howard, that ray of light, had not yet penetrated. Like the old Gehenna of Brussels, they might well have been designated Treurenberg—the house of tears.

Men felt before such buildings, at once so savage and inhospitable, the same distress that the ancient navigators suffered before the hell of slaves mentioned by Plautus, islands of creaking chains, *ferricrepidatæ insulæ*, when they passed near enough to hear clank of the fetters.

Southwark jail, an old place of exorcisms

and torture, was originally used solely for the imprisonment of sorcerers, as was proved by two verses engraved on a defaced stone at the foot of the wicket,—

Sunt arreptitii, vexati dæmone multo  
Est energumenus, quem dæmon possidet unus.

Lines which draw a subtle delicate distinction between the demoniac and man possessed by a devil.

At the bottom of this inscription, nailed flat against the wall, was a stone ladder, which had been originally of wood, but which had been changed into stone by being buried in earth of petrifying quality at a place called Apsley Gowis, near Woburn Abbey.

The prison of Southwark, now demolished, opened on two streets, between which, as a gate, it formerly served as means of communication. It had two doors. In the large street a door, apparently used by the authorities; and in the lane the door of punishment, used by the rest of the living and by the dead also, because when a prisoner in the jail died, it was by that issue that his corpse was carried out. A liberation not to be despised. Death is release into infinity.

It was by the gate of punishment that Gwynplaine had been taken into the prison. The lane, as we have said, was nothing but a little passage, paved with flints, confined between two opposite walls. There is one of the same kind at Brussels called *Rue d'une Personne*. The walls were unequal in height. The high one was the prison; the low one, the cemetery—the enclosure for the mortuary remains of the jail—was not higher than the ordinary stature of a man. In it was a gate almost opposite the prison wicket. The dead had only to cross the street; the cemetery was but twenty paces from the jail. On the high wall was affixed a gallows; on the low one was sculptured a Death's head. Neither of these walls made its opposite neighbor more cheerful

## CHAPTER VI.

THE KIND OF MAGISTRACY UNDER THE  
WIGS OF FORMER DAYS.

ANY one observing at that moment the other side of the prison—its façade—would have perceived the high street of Southwark, and might have remarked, stationed before the monumental and official entrance to the

jail, a travelling carriage, recognized as such by its imperial. A few idlers surround the carriage. On it was a coat of arms, and a personage had been seen to descend from it and enter the prison. "Probably a magistrate," conjectured the crowd. Many of the English magistrates were noble, and almost all had the right of bearing arms. In France blazon and robe were almost contradictory terms. The Duke Saint-Simon says, in speaking of magistrates, "People of that class." In England a gentleman was not despised for being a judge.

There are travelling magistrates in England; they are called judges of circuit, and nothing was easier than to recognize the carriage as a vehicle of a judge on circuit. That which was less comprehensible was, that the supposed magistrate got down, not from the carriage itself, but from the box, a place which is not habitually occupied by the owner. Another unusual thing. People travelled at that period in England in two ways. By coach, at the rate of a shilling for five mile, and by post, paying three half-pence per mile, and twopence to the postillion after each stage. A private carriage, whose owner desired to travel by relays, paid as many shillings per horse per mile as the horseman paid pence. The carriage drawn up before the jail in Southwark had four horses and two postillions, which displayed princely state. Finally, that which excited and disconcerted conjectures to the utmost was the circumstance that the carriage was sedulously shut up. The blinds of the windows were closed up. The glasses in front were darkened by blinds; every opening by which the eye might have penetrated was masked. From without, nothing within could be seen, and most likely from within, nothing could be seen outside. However, it did not seem probable that there was anyone in the carriage.

Southwark being in Surrey, the prison was within the jurisdiction of the sheriff of the county.

Such distinct jurisdictions were very frequent in England. Thus, for example, the Tower of London was not supposed to be situated in any county; that is to say, that, legally, it was considered to be in air. The Tower recognized no authority of jurisdiction except in its own constable, who was qualified as *custos turris*. The Tower had its jurisdiction, its church its court of justice, and its govern-

ment apart. The authority of its *custos* or constable extended, beyond London, over twenty-one hamlets. As in Great Britain legal singularities engraft one upon another, the office of the master gunner of England was derived from the Tower of London. Other legal customs seem still more whimsical. Thus, the English Court of Admiralty consults and applies the laws of Rhodes and of Oleron, a French island which was once English.

The sheriff of a county was a person of high consideration. He was always an esquire, and sometimes a knight. He was called *spectabilis* in the old deeds, "a man to be looked at," a kind of intermediate title between *illustris* and *clarissimus*,—less than the first, more than the second. Long ago the sheriffs of the counties were chosen by the people; but Edward II., and after him Henry VI., having claimed their nomination for the crown, the office of sheriff became a royal emanation.

They all received their commissions from majesty, except the sheriff of Westmoreland, whose office was hereditary, and the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, who were elected by the livery in the common hall. Sheriffs of Wales and Chester possessed certain fiscal prerogatives. These appointments are all still in existence in England, but, subjected little by little to the friction of manners and ideas, they have lost their old aspects. It was the duty of the sheriff of the county to escort and protect the judges on circuit. As we have two arms he had two officers; his right arm the under-sheriff, his left arm the justice of the quorum. The justice of the quorum, assisted by the bailiff of the hundred, termed the wapentake, apprehended, examined, and, under the responsibility of the sheriff, imprisoned, for trial by the judges of circuit, thieves, murderers, rebels, vagabonds, and all sorts of felons.

The shade of difference between the under-sheriff and the justice of the quorum, in their hierarchial service towards the sheriff, was that the under-sheriff accompanied and the justice of the quorum assisted.

The sheriff held two courts, one fixed and central, the county court, and a movable court, the sheriff's turn. He thus represented both unity and ubiquity. He might as judge be aided and informed on legal questions by the sergeant of the coif, called

*sergens coiffé*, who is a sergeant-at-law, and who wears under his black skull-cap a fillet of white Cambray lawn.

The sheriff delivered the jails. When he arrived at a town in his province, he had the right of summary trial of the prisoners, of which he might cause either their release or the execution. This was called a jail delivery. The sheriff presented bills of indictment to the twenty-four members of the grand jury. If they approved, they wrote above, *billa vera*; if the contrary, they wrote *ignoramus*. In the latter case the accusation was annulled, and the sheriff had the privilege of tearing up the bill. If during the deliberation a juror died, this legally acquitted the prisoner and made him innocent, and the sheriff, who had the privilege of arresting the accused, had also that of setting him at liberty.

That which made the sheriff singularly feared and respected was that he had the charge of executing all the orders of her majesty, a fearful latitude. An arbitrary power lodges in such commissions.

The officers termed *vergers*, the coroners making part of the sheriff's *cortège*, and the clerks of the market as escort, with gentlemen on horseback and their servants in livery, made a handsome suite. The sheriff, says Chamberlayne, is the "life of justice, of law, and of the country."

In England an insensible demolition constantly pulverizes and dissevers laws and customs. You must understand in our day that neither the sheriff, the wapentake, nor the justice of the quorum could exercise their functions as they did then. There was in the England of the Past a certain confusion of powers, whose ill-defined attributes resulted in their overstepping their real bounds at times, a thing which would be impossible in the present day. The usurpation of power by police and justices has ceased. We believe that even the word wapentake has changed its meaning. It implied a magisterial function; now it signifies a territorial division: it specified the centurion; it now specifies the hundred (*centum*).

Moreover, in those days the sheriff of the county combined with something more and something less, and condensed in his own authority, which was at once royal and municipal, the two magistrates formerly called in France the civil lieutenant of Paris and the

lieutenant of police. The civil lieutenant of Paris, Monsieur, is pretty well described in an old police note: "The civil lieutenant had no dislike to domestic quarrels, because he always has the pickings."—(22 July, 1704.) As to the lieutenant of police, he was a redoubtable person, multiple and vague. The best personification of him was René d'Argenson, who, as was said by Saint-Simon, displayed in his face the three judges of hell united.

The three judges of hell sat, as has already been seen, at Bishopsgate, London.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SHUDDERING.

WHEN Gwynplaine heard the wicket shut, creaking in all its bolts, he trembled. It seemed to him that the door which had just closed, was the communication between light and darkness; opening on one side on the living, human crowd, and on the other on a dead world; and now that everything illumined by the sun was behind him, that he had stepped over the boundary of life and was standing without it, his heart contracted. What were they going to do with him? What did it all mean? Where was he?

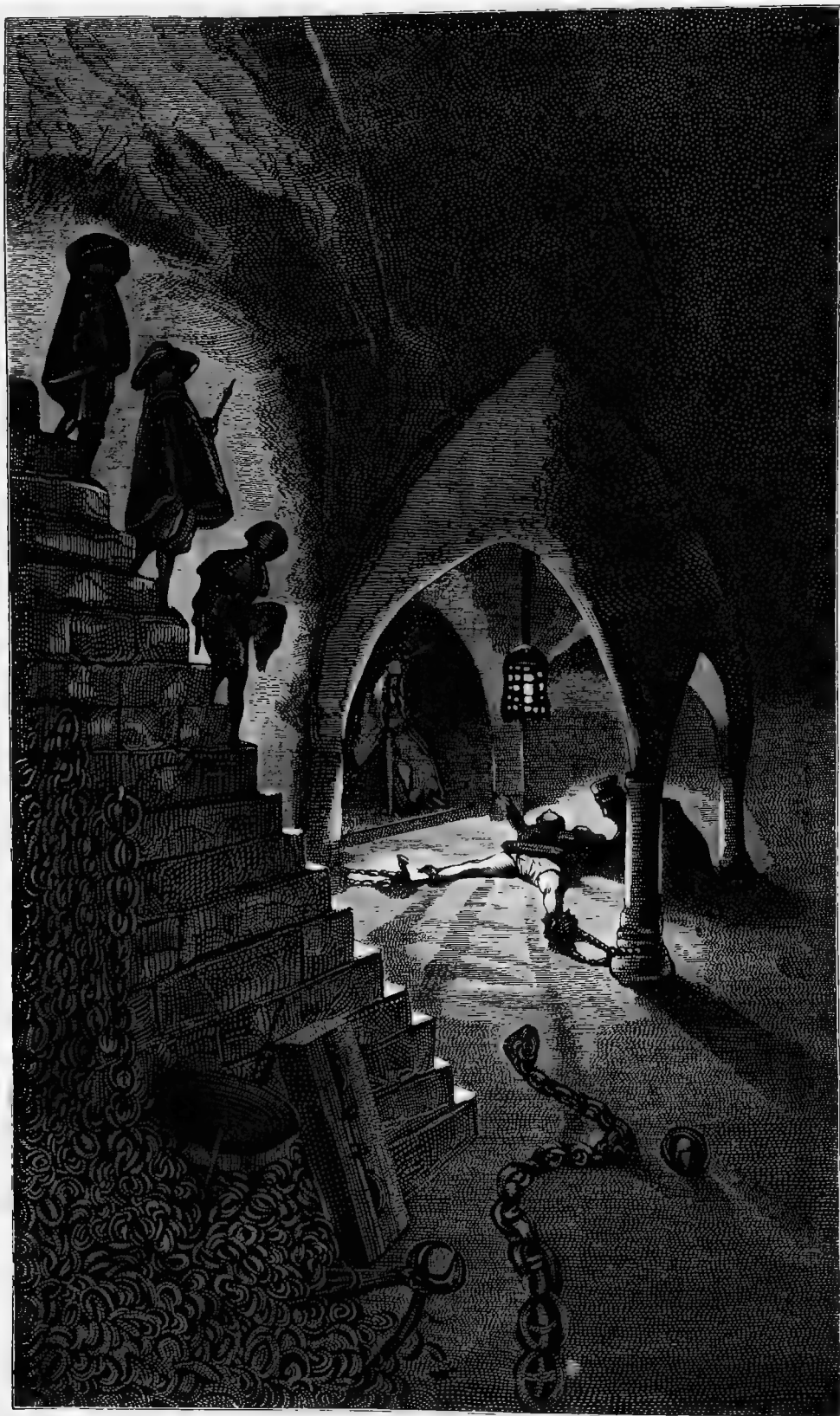
He saw nothing around him; he found himself in perfect darkness. The shutting of the door had momentarily blinded him. The window in the door had been closed as well. No loophole, no lamp. Such were the precautions of old times. It was forbidden to light the entrance to the jails, so that the new comers should take no observations.

Gwynplaine extended his arms, and touched the wall on the right side and on the left. He was in a passage. Little by little a cavernous daylight exuding, no one knows whence, and which floats about dark places, and to which the dilatation of the pupil adjusts itself slowly, enabled him to distinguish a feature here and there, and the corridor was vaguely sketched out before him.

Gwynplaine, who had never had a glimpse of penal severities, save in the exaggerations of Ursus, felt as though seized by a sort of vague gigantic hand. To be caught in the mysterious toils of the law is frightful. He who is brave in all other dangers, is disconcerted in the presence of justice. Why? Is







THE TORTURE-CHAMBER

it that the justice of man works in twilight, and the judge gropes his way? Gwynplaine remembered what Ursus had told him of the necessity for silence. He wished to see Dea again; he felt some discretionary instinct, which urged him not to irritate. Sometimes to wish to be enlightened is to make matters worse; on the other hand, however, the weight of the adventure was so overwhelming, that he gave way at length and could not restrain a question.

"Gentlemen," said he, "whither are you taking me?"

They made no answer.

It was the law of silent capture, and the Norman text is formal: *A silentiariis ostio, præpositis introducti sunt.*

This silence froze Gwynplaine. Up to that moment he had believed himself to be firm: he was self-sufficing. To be self-sufficing is to be powerful. He had lived isolated from the world, and imagined that being alone he was unassailable; and now all at once he felt himself under the pressure of a hideous collective force. How was he to combat that horrible anonyma, the law? He felt faint under the perplexity; a fear of an unknown character had found a fissure in his armor; besides, he had not slept, he had not eaten, he had scarcely moistened his lips with a cup of tea. The whole night had been passed in a kind of delirium, and the fever was still on him. He was thirsty; perhaps hungry. The craving of the stomach disorders everything. Since the previous evening all kinds of incidents had assailed him. the emotions which had tormented had sustained him. Without the storm sail would be a rag. But his was the excessive feebleness of the rag, which the wind inflates till it tears it. He felt himself sinking. Was he about to fall without consciousness on the pavement? To faint is the resource of a woman, and the humiliation of a man. He hardened himself, but he trembled. He felt as one losing his footing.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LAMENTATION.

THEY began to move forward.

They advanced through the passage.

There was no preliminary registry, no place of record. The prisons in those times were

not overburdened with documents. They were content to close round you without knowing why. To be a prison, and to hold prisoners, sufficed.

The procession was obliged to lengthen itself out, taking the form of the corridor. They walked almost in single file; first the wapentake, then Gwynplaine, then the justice of the quorum, then the constables, advancing in a group, and blocking up the passage behind Gwynplaine as with a bung. The passage narrowed. Now Gwynplaine touched the walls with both his elbows. In the roof, which was made of flints, dashed with cement, was a succession of granite arches jutting out, and still more contracting the passage. He had to stoop to pass under them. No speed was possible in that corridor. Any one trying to escape through it would have been compelled to move slowly. The passage twisted. All entrails are tortuous; those of a prison as well as those of a man. Here and there, sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left, spaces in the wall, square and closed by large iron gratings, gave glimpses of flights of stairs, some descending and some ascending.

They reached a closed door; it opened. they passed through, and it closed again. Then they came to a second door, which admitted them, then to a third, which also turned on its hinges. These doors seemed to open and shut of themselves. No one was to be seen. While the corridor contracted, the roof grew lower, until at length it was impossible to stand upright. Moisture exuded from the wall. Drops of water fell from the vault. The slabs that paved the corridor were clammy as an intestine. The diffused pallor that served as light became more and more a pall. Air was deficient, and, what was singularly ominous, the passage was a descent.

Close observation was necessary to perceive that there was such a descent. In darkness a gentle declivity is portentous. Nothing is more fearful than the vague evils to which we are led by imperceptible degrees.

It is awful to descend into unknown depths.

How long had they proceeded thus? Gwynplaine could not tell.

Moments passed under such crushing agony seem immeasurably prolonged.

Suddenly they halted.

The darkness was intense.

The corridor widened somewhat. Gwynplaine heard close to him a noise of which only a Chinese gong could give an idea; something like a blow struck against the diaphragm of the abyss. It was the wapentake striking his wand against a sheet of iron.

That sheet of iron was a door.

Not a door on hinges, but a door which was raised and let down.

Something like a portcullis.

There was a sound of creaking in a groove, and Gwynplaine was suddenly face to face with a bit of square light. The sheet of metal had just been raised into a slit in the vault, like the door of a mouse-trap.

An opening had appeared.

The light was not daylight, but glimmer; but, on the dilated eyeballs of Gwynplaine the pale and sudden ray struck like a flash of lightning.

It was some time before he could see anything. To see with dazzled eyes, is as difficult as to see in darkness.

At length, by degrees, the pupil of his eye became proportioned to the light, just as it had been proportioned to the darkness, and he was able to distinguished objects. The light, which at first had seemed too bright, settled into its proper hue, and became livid. He cast a glance into the yawning space before him, and what he saw was terrible.

At his feet were about twenty steps, steep, narrow, worn, almost perpendicular, without balustrade on either side, a sort of stone ridge cut out from the side of a wall into stairs, entering and leading into a very deep cell. They reached to the bottom.

The cell was round, roofed by an ogee vault with a low arch, from the fault of level in the top stone of the frieze, a displacement common to cells under heavy edifices.

The kind of hole acting as a door, which the sheet of iron had just revealed, and on which the stairs abutted, was formed in the vault, so that the eye looked down from it as into a well.

The cell was large, and if it was the bottom of a well, it must have been a cyclopean one. The idea of that old word, "*cul-de-basse-fosse*" awakens in the mind can only be applied to it if it were a lair of wild beasts.

The cell was neither flagged nor paved. The bottom was of that cold moist earth peculiar to deep places.

In the midst of the cell, four low and dis-

proportioned columns sustained a porch heavily ogival, of which the four mouldings united in the interior of the porch, something like the inside of a mitre. This porch, similar to the pinnacles under which sarcophagi were formerly placed, rose nearly to the top of the vault, and made a sort of central chamber in the cavern, if that could be called a chamber which had only pillars in place of walls.

From the key of the arch hung a brass lamp, round and barred like the window of a prison. This lamp threw around it—on the pillars, on the vault, on the circular wall which was seen dimly behind the pillars—a wan light, cut by bars of shadow.

This was the light which had at first dazzled Gwynplaine; now it threw out only a confused redness.

There was no other light in the cell—neither window nor door, nor loophole.

Between the four pillars, exactly below the lamp, in the spot where there was most light, a pale and terrible form lay on the ground.

It was lying on its back; a head was visible, of which the eyes were shut; a body, of which the chest was a shapeless mass; four limbs belonging to the body, in the position of the cross of Saint Andrew, were drawn towards the four pillars by four chains, fastened to each foot and each hand.

These chains were fastened to an iron ring at the base of each column. The form was held immovable, in the horrible position of being quartered, and had the icy look of a livid corpse.

It was naked. It was a man.

Gwynplaine, as if petrified, stood at the top of the stairs, looking down. Suddenly he heard a rattle in the throat.

The corpse was alive.

Close to the spectre, in one of the ogives of the door, on each side of a great seat, which stood on a large flat stone, stood two men swathed in long black cloaks; and on the seat an old man was sitting, dressed in a red robe—wan, motionless, and ominous, holding a bunch of roses in his hand.

The bunch of roses would have enlightened any one less ignorant than Gwynplaine. The right of judging with a nosegay in his hand implied the holder to be a magistrate, at once royal and municipal. The Lord Mayor of London still keeps up the custom.

To assist the deliberations of the judges was the function of the earliest roses of the season.

The old man seated on the bench was the sheriff of the county of Surrey.

His was the majestic rigidity of a Roman dignitary.

The bench was the only seat in the cell.

By the side of it was a table covered with papers and books, on which lay the long, white wand of the sheriff. The men standing by the side of the sheriff were two doctors, one of medicine, the other of law; the latter recognizable by the sergeant's coil over his wig. Both wore black robes—one of the shape worn by judges, the other by doctors.

Men of these kind wear mournings for the deaths of which they are the cause.

Behind the sheriff, at the edge of the flat stone under the seat, was crouched—with a writing table near to him, a bundle of papers on his knee, and a sheet of parchment on the bundle—a secretary in a round wig, with a pen in his hand, in the attitude of man ready to write.

This secretary was of the class called keeper of the bag, as was shown by a bag at his feet.

These bags in former times employed in law processes, were termed bags of justice.

With folded arms, leaning against a pillar, was a man entirely dressed in leather, the hangman's assistant.

These men seemed as if they had been fixed by enchantment in their funereal postures round the chained man. None of them spoke or moved.

There brooded over all a fearful calm.

What Gwynplaine saw was a torture chamber. There were many such in England.

The crypt of Beauchamp Tower long served this purpose, as did also the cell in the Lollards' prison. A place of this nature is still to be seen in London, called "the Vaults of Lady Place." In this last-mentioned chamber there is a grate for the purpose of heating the irons.

All the prisons of King John's time (and Southwark Jail was one) had their chambers of torture.

The scene which is about to follow was in those days a frequent one in England, and might, even, by criminal process be carried out to-day, since the same laws are still unrepealed. England offers the curious sight of a barbarous code living on the best terms

with liberty. We confess that they make an excellent family party.

Some distrust, however, might not be undesirable. In the case of a crisis, a return to the penal code would not be impossible. English legislation is a tamed tiger with a velvet paw, but the claws are still there. Cut the claws of the law, and you will do well. Law almost ignores right. On one side is penalty, on the other humanity. Philosophers protest; but it will take some time yet before the justice of man is assimilated to the justice of God.

Respect for the law: that is the English phrase. In England they venerate so many laws, that they never repeal any. They save themselves from the consequences of their veneration by never putting them into execution. An old law falls into disuse like an old woman, and they never think of killing either one or the other. They cease to make use of them; that is all. Both are at liberty to consider themselves still young and beautiful. They may fancy that they are as they were. This politeness is called respect.

Norman custom is very wrinkled. That does not prevent many an English judge casting sheep's eyes at her. They stick amorously to an antiquated atrocity, so long as it is Norman. What can be more savage than the gibbet? In 1867 a man was sentenced to be cut into four quarters and offered to a woman—the Queen.\*

Still, torture was never practised in England. History asserts this as a fact. The assurance of history is wonderful.

Matthew of Westminster mentions that the "Saxon law, very element and kind," did not punish criminals by death; and adds that "it limited itself to cutting off the nose and scooping out the eyes." That was all!

Gwynplaine, scared and haggard, stood at the top of the steps, trembling in every limb. He shuddered from head to foot. He tried to remember what crime he had committed. To the silence of the wapentake had succeeded the vision of torture to be endured. It is a step, indeed, forward; but a tragic one. He saw the dark enigma of the law under the power of which he felt himself increasing in obscurity.

The human form lying on the earth rattled in its throat again.

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\* The Fenian, Burke.

Gwynplaine felt some one touching him gently on the shoulder.

It was the wapentake.

Gwynplaine knew that meant that he was to descend.

He obeyed.

He descended the stairs step by step. They were very narrow, each eight or nine inches in height. There was no hand-rail. The descent required caution. Two steps behind Gwynplaine followed the wapentake, holding up his iron weapon; and at the same interval behind the wapentake, the justice of the quorum.

As he descended the steps, Gwynplaine felt an indescribable extinction of hope. There was death in each step. In each one that he descended there died a ray of the light within him. Growing paler and paler, he reached the bottom of the stairs.

The larva lying chained to the four pillars still rattled in its throat.

A voice in the shadow said—

“Approach!”

It was the sheriff addressing Gwynplaine.

Gwynplaine took a step forward.

“Closer,” said the sheriff.

The justice of the quorum murmured in the ear of Gwynplaine so gravely that there was solemnity in the whisper, “You are before the sheriff of the county of Surrey.”

Gwynplaine advanced towards the victim extended in the centre of the cell. The wapentake and the justice of the quorum remained where they were, allowing Gwynplaine to advance alone. When Gwynplaine reached the spot under the porch, close to that miserable thing which he had hitherto perceived only from a distance, but which was a living man, his fear rose to terror. The man who was chained there was quite naked, except for that rag so hideously modest, which might be called the vineleaf of punishment, the *succingulum* of the Romans, and the *christipannus* of the Goths, of which the old Gallic jargon made *cripagne*. Christ wore but that shred on the cross.

The terror-stricken sufferer whom Gwynplaine now saw, seemed a man of about fifty or sixty years of age. He was bald. Grizzly hairs of beard bristled on his chin. His eyes were closed; his mouth open. Every tooth was to be seen. His thin and bony face was like a death's-head. His arms and legs were fastened by chains to the four

stone pillars in the shape of the letter X. He had on his breast and belly a plate of iron, and on this iron five or six large stones were laid. His rattle was at times a sigh, at times a roar.

The sheriff, still holding his bunch of roses, took from the table with the hand which was free, his white wand, and standing up said, “Obedience to her majesty.”

Then he replaced the wand upon the table.

Then in words long-drawn as a knell, without a gesture, and immovable as the sufferer, the sheriff, raising his voice, said:

“Man, who liest here bound in chains, listen for the last time to the voice of justice; you have been taken from your dungeon and brought to this jail. Legally summoned in the usual forms, *formaliis verbis pressus*; not regarding to lectures and communications which have been made, and which will now be repeated, to you; inspired by a bad and perverse spirit of tenacity, you have preserved silence, and refused to answer the judge. This is a detestable license, which constitutes, among deeds punishable by cash-lit, the crime and misdemeanor of over-ness.”

The serjeant at the coif on the right of the sheriff interrupted him, and said, with an indifference indescribably lugubrious in its effect, “*Overhernessa*. Laws of Alfred and of Godrun, chapter the sixth.”

The sheriff resumed.

“The law is respected by all except by scoundrels who infest the woods where the hinds bear young.”

Like one clock striking after another, the sergeant said.

“*Qui faciunt vastum in foresta ubi damæ solent founinare.*”

“He who refuses to answer the magistrate,” said the sheriff, “is suspected of every vice. He is reputed capable of every evil.”

The serjeant interposed.

“*Prodigus, devorator, profusus, salax, rufianus, ebriosus, luxuriosus, simulator, consumptor patrimonii, elluo, ambro, et gluto.*”

“Every vice,” said the sheriff, “means every crime. He who confesses nothing, confesses everything. He who holds his peace before the questions of the judge, is in fact a liar and a parricide.”

“*Mendax et parricida,*” said the serjeant.

The sheriff said,

"Man, it is not permitted to absent one's-self by silence. To pretend contumaciousness is a wound given to the law. It is like Diomedes wounding a goddess. Taciturnity before a judge is a form of rebellion. Treason to justice is high treason. Nothing is more hateful or rash. He who resists interrogation, steals truth. The law has provided for this. For such cases, the English have always enjoyed the right of the foss, the fork, and the chains."

"*Anglica Charta*, year 1088," said the serjeant. Then with the same mechanical gravity, he added, "*ferrum, et fossam, et furcas cum aliis libertatibus.*"

The sheriff continued,

"Man! Forasmuch as you have not chosen to break silence, though of sound mind and having full knowledge in respect of the subject concerning which justice demands an answer, and forasmuch as you are diabolically refractory, you have necessarily been put to torture, and you have been, by the terms of the criminal statutes, tried by the '*Peine forte et dure.*' This is what has been done to you, for the law requires that I should fully inform you. You have been brought to this dungeon. You have been stripped of your clothes. You have been laid on your back naked on the ground, your limbs have been stretched and tied to the four pillars of the law; a sheet of iron has been placed on your chest, and as many stones as you can bear have been heaped on your belly, 'and more,' says the law."

"*Plusque*," affirmed the serjeant.

The sheriff continued,

"In this situation, and before prolonging the torture, a second summons to answer and to speak has been made you by me, sheriff of the county of Surrey, and you have satanically kept silent, though under torture, chains, shackles, fetters, and irons."

"*Attachiamenta legalia*," said the serjeant.

"On your refusal and contumacy," said the sheriff, "it being right that the obstinacy of the law should equal the obstinacy of the criminal, the proof has been continued according to the edicts and texts. The first day you were given nothing to eat or drink."

"*Hoc est superjejunare*," said the serjeant.

There was silence, the awful hiss of the man's breathing was heard from under the heap of stones.

The serjeant-at-law completed his quotation "*Adde augmentum abstinentiæ ciborum diminutione. Consuetudo brittanica*, art. 504."

The two men, the sheriff and the serjeant, alternated. Nothing could be more dreary than their imperturbable monotony. The mournful voice responded to the ominous voice; it might be said that the priest and the deacon of punishment were celebrating the savage mass of the law.

The sheriff resumed,

"On the first day you were given nothing to eat or drink. On the second day you were given food, but nothing to drink. Between your teeth were thrust three mouthfuls of barley bread. On the third day they gave you to drink, but nothing to eat. They poured into your mouth at three different times, and in three different glasses, a pint of water taken from the common sewer of the prison. The fourth day is come. It is to-day. Now, if you do not answer, you will be left here till you die. Justice wills it."

The serjeant, ready with his reply, appeared.

"*Mors rei homagium est bonæ legi.*"

"And while you feel yourself dying miserably," resumed the sheriff, "no one will attend to you, even when the blood rushes from your throat, your chin, and your armpits, and every pore, from the mouth to the loins."

"*A throtabolla*," said the serjeant, "*et pabu et subhircis et a grugno usque ad crupponum.*"

The sheriff continued,

Man, attend to me, because the consequences concern you. If you renounce your execrable silence, and if you confess, you will only be hanged, and you will have a right to the meldefeoh, which is a sum of money."

"*Dammum confitens*," said the serjeant, "*habeat le meldefeoh. Leges Inæ*, chapter the twentieth."

"Which sum," insisted the sheriff, "shall be paid in doorkins, suskins, and galihalpens, the only case in which this money is to pass, according to the terms of the statute of abolition, in the third of Henry V., and you will have the right and enjoyment of *scortum ante mortum*, and then be hanged on the gibbet. Such are the advantages of confession. Does it please you to answer to justice?"

The sheriff ceased, and waited.

The prisoner lay motionless.

The sheriff resumed,

"Man, silence is a refuge in which there is more risk than safety. The obstinate man is damnable and vicious. He who is silent before justice is a felon to the crown. Do not persist in this unfilial disobedience. Think of her majesty. Do not oppose our gracious queen. When I speak to you, answer her; be a loyal subject."

The patient rattled in the throat.

The sheriff continued.

"So after the seventy-two hours of the proof, here we are at the fourth day. Man, this is the decisive day. The fourth day has been fixed by the law for the confrontation."

"*Quarta die, frontem ad frontem adduce,*" growled the serjeant.

"The wisdom of the law," continued the sheriff, "has chosen this last hour to hold what our ancestors called 'judgment by mortal cold,' seeing that it is the moment when men are believed on their yes or their no."

The serjeant on the right confirmed his words.

"*Judicium pro frodmortell, quod homines credendi sint per suum ya et per suum no.* Charter of King Adelstan, volume the first, page one hundred and sixty-three."

There was a moment's pause; then the sheriff bent his stern face towards the prisoner.

"Man, who art lying there on the ground —"

He paused.

"Man" he cried, "Do you hear me?"

The man did not move.

"In the name of the law," said the sheriff, "open your eyes."

The man's lids remained closed.

The sheriff turned to the doctor, who was standing on his left.

"Doctor, give your diagnostic."

"*Probe, da diagnosticum,*" said the serjeant.

The doctor came down with magisterial stiffness, approached the man, leant over him, put his ear close to the mouth of the sufferer, felt the pulse at the wrist, the armpit, and the thigh, then rose again.

"Well?" said the sheriff.

"He can still hear," said the doctor.

"Can he see?" inquired the sheriff.

The doctor answered, "He can see."

On a sign from the sheriff, the justice of the quorum and the wapentake advanced. The wapentake placed himself near the head of the patient. The justice of the quorum stood behind Gwynplaine.

The doctor retired a step behind the pillars.

Then the sheriff, raising the bunch of roses as a priest about to sprinkle holy water, called to the prisoner in a loud voice, and became awful.

"O, wretched man, speak! The law supersedes before she exterminates you. You, who feign to be mute, remember how mute is the tomb. You who appear deaf, remember that damnation is more deaf. Think of the death which is worse than your present state. Repent: you are about to be left alone in this cell. Listen! you who are my likeness; for I am a man! Listen, my brother, because I am a Christian! Listen, my son, because I am an old man! Look at me; for I am the master of your sufferings, and I am about to become terrible. The terrors of the law make up the majesty of the judge. Believe, that I myself tremble before myself. My own power alarms me. Do not drive me to extremities. I am filled by the holy malice of chastisement. Feel, then, wretched man, the salutary and honest fear of justice, and obey me. The hour of confrontation is come, and you must answer. Do not harden yourself in resistance. Do not that which will be irrevocable. Think that your end belongs to me. Half man, half corpse, listen! At least, let it not be your determination to expire here, exhausted for hours, days and weeks, by frightful agonies of hunger and foulness, under the weight of those stones, alone in this cell, deserted, forgotten, annihilated, left as food for the rats and weasels, gnawed by creatures of darkness while the world comes and goes, buys and sells, whilst carriages roll in the streets above your head. Unless you would continue to draw painful breath without remission in the depths of this despair—grinding your teeth, weeping, blaspheming,—without a doctor to appease the anguish of your wounds, without a priest to offer a divine draught of water to your soul. Oh! if only that you may not feel the frightful froth of the sepulchre ooze slowly from your lips, I adjure and conjure you to hear me. I call you to your own aid. Have pity on yourself. Do what is asked of you.



Give way to justice. Open your eyes, and see if you recognize this man !”

The prisoner neither turned his head nor lifted his eyelids.

The sheriff cast a glance first at the justice of the quorum and then at the wapentake.

The justice of the quorum, taking Gwynplaine's hat and mantle, put his hands on his shoulders and placed him in the light by the side of the chained man. The face of Gwynplaine stood out clearly from the surrounding shadow, in its strange relief.

At the same time, the wapentake bent down, took the man's temples between his hands, turned the inert head towards Gwynplaine, and with his thumbs and his first fingers lifted the closed eyelids.

The prisoner saw Gwynplaine. Then, raising his head voluntarily, and opening his eyes wide, he looked at him.

He quivered as much as a man can quiver with a mountain on his breast, and then cried out,—

“ ’Tis he ! Yes; ’tis he !”

And he burst out into a horrible laugh.

“ ’Tis he !” he repeated.

Then his head fell back on the ground, and he closed his eyes again.

“ Registrar, take that down,” said the justice.

Gwynplaine, though terrified, had, up to that moment preserved a calm exterior. The cry of the prisoner—“ ’Tis he !” overwhelmed him completely. The words “ Registrar, take that down !” froze him. It seemed to him that a scoundrel had dragged him to his fate without him being able to guess why, and that the man's unintelligible confession was closing round him like the clasp of an iron collar. He fancied himself side by side with him in the posts of the same pillory. Gwynplaine lost his footing in his terror, and protested. He began to stammer incoherent words in the deep distress of an innocent man, and quivering, terrified, lost, uttered the first random outcries that rose to his mind, and words of agony like aimless projectiles.

“ It is not true. It was not me. I do not know the man. He cannot know me, since I do not know him. I have my part to play this evening. What do you want of me ? I demand my liberty. Nor is that all. Why have I been brought into this dungeon ? Are there laws no longer ? You may as well say

at once that there are no laws. My Lord Judge, I repeat that it is not I. I am innocent of all that can be said. I know I am. I wish to go away. This is not justice. There is nothing between this man and me. You can find out. My life is not hidden up. They came and took me away like a thief. Why did they come like that ! How could I know the man ? I am a travelling mountebank, who plays farces at fairs and markets. I am the Laughing Man. Plenty of people have been to see me. We are staying at Tarrinzeau Field. I have been earning an honest livelihood these fifteen years. I am five-and-twenty. I lodge at the Tadcaster Inn. I am called Gwynplaine. My lord, let me out. You should not take advantage of the low estate of the unfortunate. Have compassion on a man who has done no harm, who is without protection and without defence. You have before you a poor mountebank.”

“ I have before me,” said the sheriff, “ Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, and a peer of England.

Rising, and offering his chair to Gwynplaine, the sheriff added,—

“ My lord, will your lordship deign to eat yourself ?”

## BOOK THE FIFTH.

*THE SEA AND FATE ARE MOVED BY  
THE SAME BREATH.*

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE DURABILITY OF FRAGILE THINGS.

DESTINY sometimes proffers us a glass of madness to drink. A hand is thrust out of the mist, and suddenly hand us the mysterious cup in which is contained the latent intoxication.

Gwynplaine did not understand.

He looked behind him to see whom it was who had been addressed.

A sound may be too sharp to be perceptible to the ear; an emotion too acute conveys no meaning to the mind. There is a limit to comprehension as well as to hearing.

The wapentake and the justice of the quorum approached Gwynplaine, and took him by the arms. He felt himself placed in the chair which the sheriff had just vacated.



He let it be done, without seeking an explanation.

When Gwynplaine was seated, the justice of the quorum and the wapentake retired a few steps, and stood upright and motionless, behind the seat.

Then the sheriff placed his bunch of roses on the stone stable, put on spectacles which the secretary gave him, drew from the bundles of papers which covered the table a sheet of parchment, yellow, green, torn, and jagged in places, which seemed to have been folded in very small folds, and of which one side was covered with writing; standing under the light of the lamp, he held the sheet close to his eyes, and in the most solemn tone read as follows:—

“In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

“This present day, the twenty-ninth of January, one thousand six hundred and ninetyeth year of Our Lord.

“Has been wickedly deserted on the desert coast of Portland, with the intention of allowing him to perish of hunger, of cold, and of solitude, a child ten years old.

“That child was sold at the age of two years, by order of his most gracious majesty, King James the Second.

“That child is Lord Fermain Clancharlie, the only legitimate son of Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, a Peer of England, and of Ann Bradshaw, his wife, both deceased. That child is the inheritor of the states and titles of his father. For this reason he was sold, mutilated, disfigured, and put out of the way by desire of his most gracious majesty.

“That child was brought up, and trained to be a mountebank at markets and fairs.

“He was sold at the age of two, after the death of the peer, his father, and ten pounds sterling were given to the king as his purchase-money, as well as for divers concessions, tolerations, and immunities.

“Lord Fermain Clancharlie, at the age of two years was bought by me, the undersigned, who wrote these lines, and mutilated and disfigured by a Fleming of Flanders, called Hardquanonne, who alone is acquainted with the secrets and modes of treatment of Doctor Conquest.

“The child was destined by us to be a laughing mask (*masca ridens*).

“With this intention Hardquanonne performed on him the operation, *Bucca fissa usque ad aures*, which stamps an everlasting laugh upon the face.

“The child, by means known only to Hardquanonne, was put to sleep and made insensible during its performance, knowing nothing of the operation which he underwent.

“He does not know that he is Lord Clancharlie.

“He answers to the name of Gwynplaine.

“This fact is the result of his youth, and the slight powers of memory he could have had when he was bought and sold, being then barely two years old.

“Hardquanonne is the only person who knows how to perform the operation *Bucca fissa*, and the said child is the only living subject upon which it has been essayed.

“The operation is so unique and singular, that though after long years this child should have come to be an old man instead of a child, and his black locks should have turned white, he would be immediately recognized by Hardquanonne.

“At the time that I am writing this, Hardquanonne, who has perfect knowledge of all the facts, and participated as principal therein, is detained in the prisons of his highness the Prince of Orange, commonly called King William III. Hardquanonne was apprehended and seized as being one of the band of Comprachicos or Cheylas. He is imprisoned in the dungeon of Chatham.

“It was in Switzerland, near the lake of Geneva, between Lausanne and Vévey, in the very house in which his father and mother died, that the child was, in obedience with the orders of the king, sold and given up by the last servant of the deceased Lord Linnæus, which servant died soon after his master, so that this secret and delicate matter is now unknown to anyone on earth, excepting Hardquanonne, who is in the dungeon of Chatham, and ourselves, now about to perish.

“We, the undersigned, brought up and kept, for eight years, for professional purposes the little lord bought by us of the king.

“To-day, flying from England to avoid Hardquanonne's ill fortune, our fear of the penal indictments, prohibitions, and fulminations of parliament, has induced us to de-

sert, at nightfall, on the coast of Portland, the said child Gwynplaine, who is Lord Fermain Clancharlie.

"Now, we have sworn secrecy to the king, but not to God.

"To-night, at sea, overtaken by a violent tempest by the will of Providence, full of despair and distress, kneeling before Him who could save our lives, and may, perhaps, be willing to save our souls, having nothing more to hope from men but everything to fear from God, having for only anchor and resource repentance of our bad actions, resigned to death, and content if Divine justice be satisfied, humble, penitent, and beating our breasts, we make this declaration, and confide and deliver it to the furious ocean to use as it best may according to the will of God. And may the Holy Virgin aid us, Amen. And we attach our signatures."

The sheriff interrupted, saying,—

'Here are the signatures. All in different handwritings.'

And he resumed.

"Doctor Gernardus Geestemunde.—Asuncion.—A cross, and at the side of it, Barbara Fermoy, from Tyrryf isle, in the Hebrides; Gaizdorra, Captain; Giangirate; Jacques Quartourze, alias le Narbonnais; Luc-Pierre Capgaroupe, from the galleys of Mahon."

The sheriff, after a pause, resumed, a 'note written in the same hands as the text and the first signature,' and he read,—

"Of the three men comprising the crew, the skipper having been swept off by a wave, there remain but two, and we have signed, Galdeazun; Ave Maria, Thief."

The sheriff, interspersing his reading with his own observations, continued, 'At the bottom of the sheet is written,'—

"At sea, on board of the *Matutina*, Biscay hooker, from the Gulf de Pasages." 'This sheet,' added the sheriff, 'is a legal document, bearing the mark of King James the Second. On the margin of the declaration, and in the same handwriting, there is this note;' "The present declaration is written by us on the back of the royal order, which was given us as our receipt when we bought the child. Turn the leaf and the order will be seen."

The sheriff turned the parchment, and raised it in his right hand, to expose it to the light.

A blank page was seen, if the word blank

can be applied to a thing so mouldy, and in the middle of the page three words were written, two Latin words, *Jussu regis*, and a signature, *Jefferies*.

"*Jussu regis, Jefferies*," said the sheriff, passing from a grave voice to a clear one.

Gwynplaine was as a man on whose head a tile falls from the palace of dreams.

He began to speak, like one who speaks unconsciously.

"Gernardus, yes, the doctor. An old, sad-looking man. I was afraid of him. Gaizdorra, Captain, that means chief. There were women, Asuncion, and the other. And then the Provençal, His name was Capgaroupe. He used to drink out of a flat bottle on which there was a name written in red."

"Behold it," said the sheriff.

He placed on the table something which the secretary had just taken out of the bag. It was a gourd, with handles like ears, covered with wicker. This bottle had evidently seen service, and had sojourned in the water. Shells and seaweed adhered to it. It was encrusted and damascened over with the rust of ocean. There was a ring of tar round its neck, showing that it had been hermetically sealed. Now it was unsealed and open. They had, however, replaced in the flask a sort of bung made of tarred oakum, which had been used to cork it.

"It was in this bottle," said the sheriff, "that the men about to perish placed the declaration which I have just read. This message addressed to justice has been faithfully delivered by the sea."

The sheriff increased the majesty of his tones, and continued,—

"In the same way that Harrow Hill produces excellent wheat, which is turned into fine flour for the royal table, so the sea renders every service in its power to England, and when a nobleman is lost finds, and restores him."

Then he resumed,—

"On this flask, as you say, there is a name written in red."

He raised his voice, turning to the motionless prisoner,—

"Your name, malefactor, is here. Such are the hidden channels by which truth, swallowed up in the gulf of human actions, floats to the surface."

The sheriff took the gourd, and turned to the light one of its sides, which had, no

doubt, been cleaned for the ends of justice. Between the interstices of wicker was a narrow line of red reed, blackened here and there by the action of water and of time.

The reed, notwithstanding some breakages, traced distinctly in the wicker-work these twelve letters—Hardquanonne.

Then the sheriff, resuming the monotonous tone of voice which resembles nothing else, and which may be termed a judicial accent, turned towards the sufferer.

“Hardquanonne! when by us, the sheriff, this bottle, on which is your name, was for the first time shown, exhibited, and presented to you, you at once, and willingly, recognized it as having belonged to you. Then, the parchment being read to you which was contained, folded and enclosed within it, you would say no more; and in the hope, doubtless, that the lost child would never be recovered, and that you would escape punishment, you refused to answer. As the result of your refusal, you have had applied to you the *peine forte et dure*; and the second reading of the said parchment, on which is written the declaration and confession of your accomplices was made to you—but in vain.

“This is the fourth day, and that which is legally set apart for the confrontation, and he who was deserted on the twenty-ninth of January, one thousand six hundred and ninety, having been brought into your presence, your devilish hope has vanished, you have broken silence, and recognized your victim.”

The prisoner opened his eyes, lifted his head, and, with a voice strangely resonant of agony, but which had still an indescribable calm mingled with its hoarseness, pronounced in excruciating accents from under the mass of stones, words, to pronounce each of which he had to lift that which was like the slab of a tomb placed upon him. He spoke.

“I swore to keep the secret. I have kept it as long as I could. Men of dark lives are faithful, and hell has its honor. Now silence is useless. So be it! For this reason I speak. Well—yes; ’tis he! We did it between us—the king and I! The king, by his will; I, by my art!”

And looking at Gwynplaine,—

“Now laugh for ever!”

And he himself began to laugh.

This second laugh, wilder yet than the first, might have been taken for a sob.

The laugh ceased, and the man lay back. His eyelids closed.

The sheriff, who had allowed the prisoner to speak, resumed,—

“All which is placed on record.”

He gave the secretary time to write, and then said,—

“Hardquanonne, by the term of the law, after confrontation followed by identification: after the third reading of the declarations of your accomplices, since confirmed by your recognition and confession, and after your renewed avowal, you are about to be relieved from these irons, and placed at the good pleasure of her majesty to be hung as *plagiary*.”

“*Plagiary*,” said the serjeant of the coif. That is to say a buyer and seller of children. Law of the Visigoths, seventh book, third section, paragraph *Usurpaverit*, and Salic law, section the forty-first, paragraph the second, and law of the Frisons, section the twenty-first, *Deplagio*; and Alexander Nequam says,—

“‘*Qui pueros vendis, plagiarius est tibi nomen.*’”

The sheriff placed the parchment on the table, laid down his spectacles, took up the nosegay, and said,—

“End of *la peine forte et dure*. Hardquanonne, thank her majesty.”

By a sign, the justice of the quorum set in motion the man dressed in leather.

This man, who was the executioner’s assistant, “groom of the gibbet,” the old charters call him, went to the prisoner, took off the stones, one by one, from his chest, and lifted the plate of iron up, exposing the wretch’s crushed sides. Then he freed his wrists and ankle-bones from the four chains that fastened him to the pillars.

The prisoner, released alike from stones and chains, lay flat on the ground, his eyes closed, his arms and legs apart, like a crucified man taken down from a cross.

“Hardquanonne,” said the sheriff, arise!”

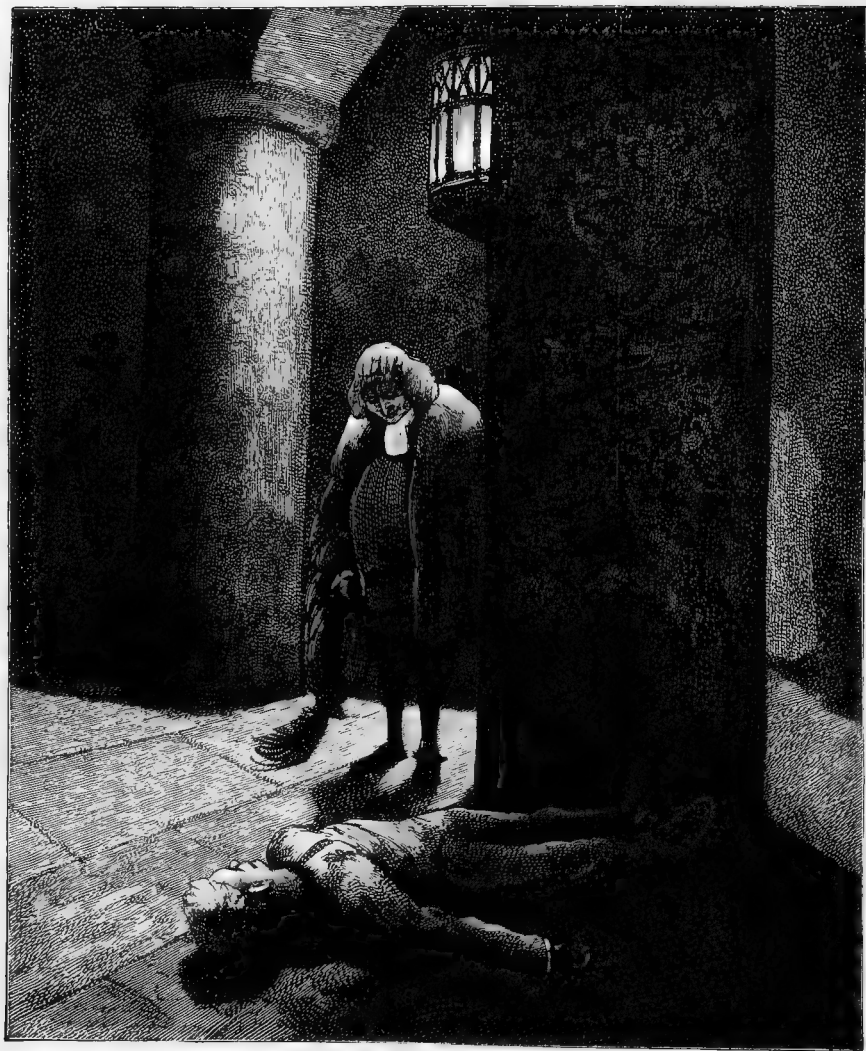
The prisoner did not move.

The groom of the gibbet took up a hand and let it go; the hand fell back. The other hand being raised, fell back likewise.

The groom of the gibbet seized one foot and then the other, and the heels fell back on the ground.

The fingers remained inert, and the toes motionless. The naked feet of an extended corpse seem, as it were, to bristle.





"I COME TO AWAKE YOU, INDEED."

Hugo, vol. III, p. 403.

The doctor approached, and drawing from a pocket of his robe a little mirror of steel, it to the open mouth of Hardquanonne, then with his fingers he opened the eyelids. They did not close again. The glassy eyes remained fixed.

The doctor rose up and said,—

“He is dead.”

And he added,—

“He laughed ; that killed him.”

“’Tis of little consequence,” said the sheriff. “After confession, life or death is a mere formality.”

Then, pointing to Hardquanonne by a gesture with the nosegay of roses, the sheriff gave the order to the wapentake,—

“A corpse to be carried away to-night.”

The wapentake acquiesced by a nod.

And the sheriff added,—

“The cemetery of the jail is opposite.”

The wapentake nodded again.

The sheriff, holding in his left hand the nosegay and in his right the white wand, placed himself opposite Gwynplaine, who was still seated, and made him a low bow; then assuming another solemn attitude, he turned his head over his shoulder and looking Gwynplaine in the face, said,—

“To you here present, we Phillip Denzill Arsons, knight, sheriff of the county of Surrey, assisted by Aubrey Dominick, Esq., our clerk and registrar, and by our usual officers, duly provided by the direct and special commands of her majesty, in virtue of our commission, and the rights and duties of our office, and with authority from the Lord Chancellor of England, the affidavits having been drawn up and recorded, regard being had to the documents communicated by the Admiralty, after verification of attestations and signatures, after declarations read and heard, after confrontation made, all the statements and legal information having been completed, exhausted, and brought to a good end just issue, we signify and declare to you, under that right may be done, that you are remain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Ankerville, Marquis de Coloneone in Sicily, and a peer of England; and God keep your lordship!”

And he bowed to him.

The serjeant on the right, the doctor, the justice of the quorum, the wapentake, the secretary, all the attendants except the executioner, repeated his salutation still more re-

spectfully, and bowed to the ground before Gwynplaine.

“Ah!” said Gwynplaine; “awake me!”

And he stood up, pale as death.

“I come to awake you indeed,” said a voice which had not yet been heard.

A man came out from behind the pillars. As no one had entered the cell since the sheet of iron had given passage to the *cortège* of police, it was clear that this man had been there in the shadow before Gwynplaine had entered, that he had a regular right of attendance, and had been present by appointment and mission. The man was fat and pursy, and wore a court wig and a travelling cloak.

He was rather old than young, and very precise.

He saluted Gwynplaine with ease and respect—with the ease of a gentlemen-in-waiting, and without the awkwardness of a judge.

“Yes,” he said ; “I have come to awaken you. For twenty-five years you have slept. You have been dreaming. It is time to awake. You believe yourself to be Gwynplaine; you are Clancharlie. You believe yourself to be one of the people; you belong to the peerage. You believe yourself to be of the lowest rank; you are of the highest. You believe yourself a player; you are a senator. You believe yourself poor; you are wealthy. You believe yourself to be of no account; you are important. Awake, my lord!”

Gwynplaine, in a low voice, in which a tremor of fear was to be distinguished, murmured,—

“What does it all mean?”

“It means, my lord, said the fat man, “that I am called Barkilphedro; that I am an officer of the Admiralty; that this waif, the flask of Hardquanonne, was found on the beach, and was brought to be unsealed by me, according to the duty and prerogative of my office; that I opened it in the presence of two sworn jurors of the Jetsam Office, both members of Parliament, William Brathwait, for the city of Bath, and Thomas Jervois, for Southampton; that the two jurors deciphered and attested the contents of the flask, and signed the necessary affidavit conjointly with me; that I made my report to her majesty, and by order of the queen all necessary and legal formalities were carried out with the

discretion necessary in a matter so delicate; that the last form, the confrontation, has just been carried out; that you have 40,000*l.* a year; that you are a peer of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, a legislator and a judge, a supreme judge, a sovereign legislator, drest in purple and ermine, equal to princes, like unto emperors; that you have on your brow the coronet of a peer, and that you are about to wed a duchess, the daughter of a king."

Under this transfiguration, overwhelming him like a series of thunderbolts, Gwynplaine fainted.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WAIF KNOWS ITS OWN COURSE.

ALL this had occurred owing to the circumstance of a soldier having found a bottle on the beach.

We will relate the facts.

In all facts there are wheels within wheels.

One day one of the four gunners composing the garrison of Castle Calshor picked up on the sand at low water a flask covered with wicker, which had been cast up by the tide. This flask, covered with mould, was corked by a tarred bung. The soldier carried the waif to the colonel of the castle, and the colonel sent it to the High Admiral of England. The Admiral meant the Admiralty; with waifs, the Admiralty meant Barkilphedro.

Barkilphedro, having uncorked and emptied the bottle, carried it to the queen. The queen immediately took the matter into consideration.

Two weighty counsellors were instructed and consulted; viz., the Lord Chancellor, who is by law the guardian of the king's conscience, and the Lord Marshal, who is referee in Heraldry and in the pedigrees of the nobility. Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, a Catholic peer, who is hereditary Earl Marshal of England, had sent word by his deputy Earl Marshal, Henry Howard, Earl Bindon, that he would agree with the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor was William Cowper. We must not confound this chancellor with his namesake and contemporary William Cowper, the anatomist and commentator on Bidloo, who published a treatise on muscles, in England, at the very time that Etienne

Abeille published a history of bones, in France. A surgeon is a very different thing from a Lord. Lord William Cowper is celebrated for having, with reference to the affair of Talbot Yelverton, Viscount Longueville, propounded this opinion: That in the English constitution, the restoration of a peer is more important than the restoration of a king. The flask found at Calshor had awakened his interest in the highest degree. The author of a maxim delights in opportunities to which it may be applied. Here was a case of the restoration of a peer. Search was made. Gwynplaine, by the inscription over his door, was soon found. Neither was Hardquanonne dead. A prison rots a man, but preserves him: if to keep is to preserve. People placed in Bastiles were rarely removed. There is little more change in the dungeon than in the tomb. Hardquanonne was still in the prison at Chatham. They had only to put their hands on him. He was transferred from Chatham to London. In the meantime, information was sought in Switzerland. The facts were found to be correct. They obtained from the local archives at Vévey, at Lausanne, the certificate of Lord Linnæus' marriage in exile, the certificate of his child's birth, the certificate of the decease of the father and mother; and they had duplicates, duly authenticated, made to answer all necessary requirements.

All this was done with the most rigid secrecy, with what is called royal promptitude, and with that mole-like silence recommended and practised by Bacon, and later on made law by Blackstone, for affairs connected with the Chancellorship and the State, and in matters termed parliamentary. The *jussu regis* and the signature *Jefferies* were authenticated. To those who have studied pathologically the cases of caprice called "our good will and pleasure," this *jussu regis* is very simple. Why should James II., whose credit required the concealment of such acts, have allowed that to be written which endangered their success? The answer is, cynicism—haughty indifference. Oh! you believe that effrontery is confined to abandoned women? The *raison d'état* is equally abandoned. *Et se cupit ante videri*. To commit a crime and emblazon it,—there is the sum total of history. The king tattoos himself like the convict. Often when it would be to a man's greatest advantage to escape from the hands

of the police, or the records of history, he would seem to regret the escape, so great is the love of notoriety. Look at my arm ! Observe the design ! I am Lacenaire ! See, a temple of love and a burning heart pierced through with an arrow ! *Jussu regis*. It is I, James the Second. A man commits a bad action, and places his mark upon it. To fill up the measure of crime by effrontery, to denounce himself, to cling to his misdeeds, is the insolent bravado of the criminal. Christina seized Monaldeschi, had him confessed and assassinated, and said,—

“I am the Queen of Sweden, in the Palace of the King of France.”

There is the tyrant who conceals himself, like Tiberius; and the tyrant who displays himself, like Philip II. One has the attributes of the scorpion, the other those rather of the leopard. James II. was of this latter variety. Hé had, we know, a gay and open countenance, differing so far from Philip. Philip was sullen; James jovial. Both were equally ferocious. James II. was an easy-minded tiger; like Philip II., his crimes lay light upon his conscience. He was a monster by the grace of God. Therefore he had nothing to dissimulate nor to extenuate, and his assassinations were by divine right. He, too, would not have minded leaving behind him those archives of Simancas, with all his misdeeds dated, classified, labelled, and put in order, each in its compartment, like poisons in the cabinet of a chemist. To set the sign-manual to crimes is right royal.

Every deed done is a draft drawn on the great invisible paymaster. A bill had just come due with the ominous endorsement, *Jussu regis*.

Queen Anne, in one particular unfeminine, seeing that she could keep a secret, demanded a confidential report of so grave a matter from the Lord Chancellor; one of the kind specified as “report to the royal ear.” Reports of this kind have been common in all monarchies. At Vienna there was “a counsellor of the ear”—an aulic dignitary. It was an ancient Carlovigian office—the *auricularius* of the old palatine deeds. He who whispers to the emperor.

William, Baron Cowper, Chancellor of England, whom the Queen believed in because he was short-sighted like herself, or even more so, had committed to writing a memorandum commencing thus:—“Two

birds were subject to Solomon, a lapwing, the Hudbud, who could speak all languages, and an eagle, the Simourganka, who covered with the shadow of his wings a caravan of twenty thousand men. Thus, under another form, Providence,” etc. The Lord Chancellor proved the fact that the heir to a peerage had been carried off, mutilated, and then restored. He did not blame James II., who was, after all, the Queen’s father. He even went so far as to justify him. First, there are ancient monarchical maxims. *E senioratu eripimus. In roturagio cadat*. Secondly, there is a royal right of mutilation. Chamberlayne asserts the fact.\* *Corpora et bona nostorum subjectorum nostra sunt*, said James I., of glorious and learned memory. The eyes of dukes of the blood royal have been plucked out for the good of the kingdom. Certain princes, too near to the throne, have been conveniently stifled between mattresses, the cause of death being given out as apoplexy. Now, to stifle is worse than to mutilate. The King of Tunis tore out the eyes of his father, Muley Assam, and his ambassadors have not been the less favorably received by the Emperor. Hence the king may order the suppression of a limb like the suppression of a state, etc. It is legal. But one law does not destroy another. “If a drowned man is cast up by the water, and is not dead, it is an act of God readjusting one of the king. If the heir be found, let the coronet be given back to him. Thus was it done for Lord Alla, King of Northumberland, who was also a mountebank. Thus should be done to Gwynplaine, who is also a king, seeing that he is a peer. The lowness of the occupation which he has been obliged to follow, under constraint of superior power, does not tarnish the blazon; as in the case of Abdelmumen, who was a king, although he had been a gardener; that of Joseph, who was a saint, although he had been a carpenter; that of Apollo, who was a god, although he had been a shepherd.”

In short, the learned chancellor concluded by advising the reinstatement in all his estates and dignities, of Lord Fermain Charlie, miscalled Gwynplaine, on the sole condition that he should be confronted with the criminal Hardquanonne, and identified by the same. And on this point the chan-

\* The life and the limbs of subjects depend on the king. Chamberlayne Part 2 chap iv p 76



cellor, as constitutional keeper of the royal conscience, based the royal decision. The Lord Chancellor added in a postscript that if Hardquanonne refused to answer, he should be subjected to the *peine forte et dure*, until the period called the *frodmortell*, according to the statute of King Athelstane, which orders the confrontation to take place on the fourth day. In this there is a certain inconvenience, for if the prisoner dies on the second or third day the confrontation becomes difficult; still the law must be obeyed. The inconvenience of the law makes part and parcel of it. In the mind of the Lord Chancellor, however, the recognition of Gwynplaine by Hardquanonne was indubitable.

Anne, having been made aware of the deformity of Gwynplaine, and not wishing to wrong her sister, on whom had been bestowed the estates of Clancharlie, graciously decided that the Duchess Josiana should be espoused by the new lord,—that is to say, by Gwynplaine.

The reinstatement by Lord Fermain Clancharlie was, moreover, a very simple affair, the heir being legitimate, and in the direct line.

In cases of doubtful descent and of peerages in abeyance claimed by collaterals, the House of Lords must be consulted. This (to go no further back) was done in 1782, in the case of the barony of Sidney, claimed by Elizabeth Perry; in 1798, in that of the barony of Beaumont, claimed by Thomas Stapleton; in 1803, in that of the barony of Chandos, claimed by the Reverend Timewell Brydges; in 1813, in that of the earldom of Banbury, claimed by General Knollys, etc., etc. But the present was no similar case. Here there was no pretence for litigation; the legitimacy was undoubted; the right clear and certain. There was no point to submit to the House, and the Queen, assisted by the Lord Chancellor, had power to recognize and admit the new peer.

Barkilphedro managed everything.

The affair, thanks to him, was kept so close, the secret was so hermetically sealed, that neither Josiana nor Lord David caught sight of the fearful abyss which was being dug under them. It was easy to deceive Josiana, entrenched as she was behind a rampart of pride. She was self-isolated. As to Lord David, they sent him to sea, off the coast of Flanders. He was going to lose his

peerage, and had no suspicion of it. One circumstance is noteworthy.

It happened that at six leagues from the anchorage of the naval station commanded by Lord David, a captain called Halyburton broke through the French fleet. The Earl of Pembroke, President of the Council, proposed that this Captain Halyburton should be made vice-admiral. Anne struck out Halyburton's name, and put Lord David Dirry-Moir's in its place, that he might, when no longer a peer, have the satisfaction of being a vice-admiral.

Anne was well pleased. A hideous husband for her sister, and a fine step for Lord David. Mischief and kindness combined.

Her majesty was going to enjoy a comedy. Besides, she argued to herself that she was repairing an abuse of power committed by her august father. She was reinstating a member of the peerage. She was acting like a great queen; she was protecting innocence according to the will of God; that Providence in its holy and impenetrable ways, etc., etc. It is very sweet to do a just action which is disagreeable to those whom we do not like.

To know that the future husband of her sister was deformed, sufficed the queen. In what manner Gwynplaine was deformed, and by what kind of ugliness, Barkilphedro had not communicated to the queen, and Anne had not deigned to inquire. She was proudly and royally disdainful. Besides, what could it matter? The House of Lords could not but be grateful. The Lord Chancellor, its oracle, had approved. To restore a peer, is to restore the peerage. Royalty on this occasion had shown itself a good and scrupulous guardian of the privileges of the peerage. Whatever might be the face of the new lord, a face cannot be urged in objection to a right. Anne said all this to herself, or something like it and went straight to her object, an object at once grand, womanlike, and regal; namely, to give herself a pleasure.

The queen was then at Windsor, a circumstance which placed a certain distance between the intrigues of the court and the public. Only such persons as were absolutely necessary to the plan were in the secret of what was taking place. As to Barkilphedro, he was joyful, a circumstance which gave a lugubrious expression to his face. If there be one thing in the world which can be more hideous than another, 'tis joy.

He had had the delight of being the first to taste the contents of Hardquanonne's flask. He seemed but little surprised, for astonishment is the attribute of a little mind. Besides, was it not all due to him, who had waited so long on duty at the gate of chance? Knowing how to wait he had fairly won his reward.

This *nil admirari* was an expression of face. At heart we may admit that he was very much astonished. Any one who could have lifted the mask with which he covered his inmost heart even before God, would have discovered this: that at the very time Barkilphedro had begun to feel finally convinced that it would be impossible—even to him, the intimate and most infinitesimal enemy of Josiana—to find a vulnerable point in her lofty life. Hence an access of savage animosity lurked in his mind. He had reached the paroxysm which is called discouragement. He was all the more furious, because despairing. To gnaw one's chain!—how tragic and appropriate the expression! A villian gnawing at his own powerlessness!

Barkilphedro was perhaps just on the point of renouncing, not his desire to do evil to Josiana, but his hope of doing it; not the rage, but the effort. But how degrading to be thus baffled! To keep hate thenceforth in a case, like a dagger in a museum! How bitter the humiliation!

All at once to a certain goal—Chance, immense and universal, loves to bring such coincidences about—the flask of Hardquanonne came, driven from wave to wave, into Barkilphedro's hands. There is in the unknown an indescribable fealty which seems to be at the beck and call of evil. Barkilphedro, assisted by two chance witnesses, disinterested jurors of the Admiralty, uncorked the flask, found the parchment, unfolded, read it. What words could express his devilish delight!

It is strange to think that the sea, the wind, space, the ebb and flow of the tide, storms, calms, breezes, should have given themselves so much trouble to bestow happiness on a scoundrel. That co-operation had continued for fifteen years. Mysterious efforts! During fifteen years the ocean had never for an instant ceased from its labors. The waves transmitted from one to another the floating bottle. The shelving rocks had

yawned in the flask; no friction had displaced the cork; the seaweeds had not rotted the ozier; the shells had not eaten out the word "Hardquanonne;" the water had not penetrated into the waif; the mould had not rotted the parchment; the wet had not effaced the writing. What trouble the abyss must have taken! Thus that which Gernardus had flung into darkness, darkness had handed back to Barkilphedro. The message sent to God had reached the devil. Space had committed an abuse of confidence, and a lurking sarcasm which mingles with events had so arranged that it had complicated the loyal triumph of the lost child's becoming Lord Chancharlie with a venomous victory,—in doing a good action, it had mischievously placed justice at the service of iniquity. To save the victim of James II. was to give a prey to Barkilphedro. To reinstate Gwynplaine was to crush Josiana. Barkilphedro had succeeded; and it was for this that for so many years the waves, the surge, the squalls had buffeted, shaken, thrown, pushed, tormented, and respected this bubble of glass, which bore within it so many commingled fates. It was for this that there had been a cordial co-operation between the winds, the tides, and the tempests: a vast agitation of all prodigies for the pleasure of a scoundrel; the infinite co-operating with an earthworm. Destiny is subject to such grim caprices.

Barkilphedro was struck by a flash of Titanic pride. He said to himself that it had all been done to fulfil his intention. He felt that he was the object and the instrument.

But he was wrong. Let us clear the character of chance.

Such was not the real meaning of the remarkable circumstance of which the hatred of Barkilphedro was to profit. Ocean had made itself father and mother to an orphan, had sent the hurricane against his executioners, had wrecked the vessel which had repulsed the child, had swallowed up the clasped hands of the storm-beaten sailors, refusing their supplications and accepting only their repentance; the tempest received a deposit from the hands of death. The strong vessel containing the crime was replaced by the fragile phial containing the reparation. The sea changed its character, and like a mother turning away from

rock the cradle, not of the child, but of his destiny, whilst he grew up ignorant of all that the depths of ocean were doing for him.

The waves to which this flask had been flung watching over that past which contained a future; the whirlwind breathing kindly on it; the currents directing the frail waif across the fathomless wastes of water; the caution exercised by seaweed, the swells, the rocks; the vast froth of the abyss, taking under their protection an innocent child; the wave imperturbable as a conscience; chaos reestablishing order; the world-wide shadows ending in radiance; darkness employed to bring to light the star of truth; the exile consoled in his tomb; the heir given back to his inheritance; the crime of the king repaired; divine premeditation obeyed; the little, the weak, the deserted child with infinity for a guardian! All this Barkilphedro might have seen in the event on which he triumphed. This is what he did not see. He did not believe that it had all been done for Gwynplaine. He fancied that it had been effected for Barkilphedro, and that he was well worth the trouble. Thus it is ever with Satan.

Moreover, ere we feel astonished that a waif so fragile should have floated for fifteen years undamaged, we should seek to understand the tender care of the ocean. Fifteen years is nothing. On the 4th of October, 1867, on the coast of Morbihan, between the Isle de Croix, the extremity of the peninsula de Gavres, and the Rocher des Errants, the fisherman of Port Louis found a Roman amphora of the fourth century, covered with arabesques by the incrustations of the sea. That amphora has been floating fifteen hundred years.

Whatever appearance of indifference Barkilphedro tried to exhibit, his wonder had equalled his joy. Everything he could desire was there to his hand. All seemed ready made. The fragments of the event which was to satisfy his hate were spread out within his reach. He had nothing to do but to pick them up and fit them together—a repair which it was an amusement to execute. He was the artificer.

Gwynplaine! He knew the name. *Masca ridens*. Like every one else, he had been to see the laughing man. He had read the sign nailed up against the Tadcaster Inn, as one reads a playbill that attracts a crowd. He

had noted it. He remembered it directly in its most minute details; and, in any case, it was easy to compare them with the original. That notice, in the electrical summons which arose in his memory, appeared in the depths of his mind, and placed itself by the side of the parchment signed by the shipwrecked crew, like an answer following a question, like the solution following an enigma; and the lines—"Here is to be seen Gwynplaine, deserted at the age of ten, on the 29th of January, 1690, on the coast at Portland"—suddenly appeared to his eyes in the splendor of an apocalypse. His vision was the light of *Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, outside a booth. Here was the destruction of the edifice which made the existence of Josiana. A sudden earthquake. The lost child was found. There was a Lord Clancharlie. David Dirry-Moir was nobody. Peerage, riches, power rank—all these things left Lord David and entered Gwynplaine. All the castles, parks, forests, town houses, palaces, domains, Josiana included, belonged to Gwynplaine. And what a climax for Josiana! What had she now before her? Illustrious and haughty, a player; beautiful, a monster. Who could have hoped for this? The truth was, that the joy of Barkilphedro had become enthusiastic. The most hateful combinations are surpassed by the infernal munificence of the unforeseen. When reality likes, it works masterpieces. Barkilphedro found that all his dreams had been nonsense; reality were better.

The change he was about to work would not have seemed less desirable had it been detrimental to him. Insects exist which are so savagely disinterested that they sting, knowing that to sting is to die. Barkilphedro was like such vermin.

But this time he had not the merit of being disinterested. Lord David Dirry-Moir owed him nothing, and Lord Fermain Clancharlie was about to owe him everything. From being a *protege*, Barkilphedro was about to become a protector. Protector of whom? Of a peer of England. He was going to have a lord of his own, and a lord who would be his creature. Barkilphedro counted on giving him his first impressions. His peer would be the morganatic brother-in-law of the queen. His ugliness would please the queen in the same proportion as it displeased Josiana. Advancing by such favor, and

assuming grave and modest airs, Barkilphedro might become a somebody. He had always been destined for the church. He had a vague longing to be a bishop.

Meanwhile he was happy.

Oh, what a great success! and what a deal of useful work had chance accomplished for him!

His vengeance—for he called it his vengeance—had been softly brought to him by the waves. He had not lain in ambush in vain.

He was the rock, Josiana was the waif, Josiana was about to be dashed against Barkilphedro, to his intense villainous ecstasy.

He was clever in the art or suggestion, which consists in making in the minds of others a little incision into which you put an idea of your own;—holding himself aloof, and without appearing to mix himself up in the matter, it was he who arranged that Josiana should go the Green Box and see Gwynplaine. It could do no harm. The appearance of the mountebank, in his low estate, would be a good ingredient in the combination. Later on, it would season it.

He had quietly prepared everything beforehand. What he most desired was something unspeakably abrupt. The work on which he was engaged could only be expressed in these strange words: the construction of a thunder-bolt.

All preliminaries being complete, he had watched till all the necessary legal formalities had been accomplished. The secret had not oozed out, silence being an element of law.

The confrontation of Hardquanonne with Gwynplaine had taken place. Barkilphedro had been present. We have seen the result.

The same day a postchaise belonging to the royal household was suddenly sent by her majesty to fetch Lady Josiana from London to Windsor, where the queen was at the time residing.

Josiana, for reasons of her own, would have been very glad to disobey, or at least to delay obedience, and put off her departure till next day: but court life does not admit of these objections. She was obliged to set out at once, and to leave her residence in London, Hunkerville House, for her residence at Windsor, Corleone Lodge.

The Duchess, Josiana left London at the very moment that the wapentake appeared

at the Tadcaster Inn to arrest Gwynplaine, and to take him to the torture cell of Southwark.

When she arrived at Windsor, the Usher of the Black Rod, who guards the door of the presence chamber, informed her that her majesty was in audience with the Lord Chancellor and could not receive her till the next day; that, consequently she was to remain at Corleone Lodge, at the orders of her majesty; and that she should receive the queen's commands direct, when her majesty awoke the next morning. Josiana entered her house feeling very spiteful, supped in a bad humor, had the spleen, dismissed every one except her page, then dismissed him, and went to bed while it was yet daylight.

When she arrived she had learnt that Lord David Dirry-Moir was expected at Windsor the next day, owing to his having, whilst at sea; received orders to return immediately and receive her majesty's commands.

### CHAPTER III.

#### AN AWAKENING.

"No man could pass suddenly from Siberia into Senegal without losing consciousness."—*Humboldt.*

THE swoon of a man, even of one the most firm and energetic, under the sudden shock of an unexpected stroke of good fortune, is nothing wonderful. A man is knocked down by the unforeseen blow, like an ox by the poleaxe. Francis d'Albescola, he who tore from the Turkish ports their iron chains, remained a whole day without consciousness when they made him pope. Now the stride from a cardinal to a pope is less than that from a mountebank to a peer of England.

No shock is so violent as a loss of equilibrium.

When Gwynplaine came to himself and opened his eyes, it was night. He was in an armchair, in the midst of a large chamber lined throughout with purple velvet, over walls ceiling and floor. The carpet was velvet. Standing near him, with uncovered head, was the fat man in the travelling cloak, who had emerged from behind the pillar in the cell at Southwark. Gwynplaine was alone in the chamber with him. From the chair, by extending his arms, he could reach two tables, each bearing a branch of six lighted wax candles. On one of these tables

were papers and a casket, on the other refreshments; a cold fowl, wine and brandy, served on a silver-gilt salver.

Through the panes of a high window, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, a semi-circle of pillars was to be seen, in the clear April night, encircling a courtyard with three gates, one very wide, and the other two, low. The carriage gate, of great size, was in the middle; on the right, that for equestrians, smaller; on the left, that for foot-passengers, still less. These gates were formed of iron railings, with glittering points. A tall piece of sculpture surmounted the central one. The columns were probably in white marble, as well as the pavement of the court, thus producing an effect like snow, and framed in its sheet of flat flags was a mosaic, the pattern of which was vaguely marked in the shadow. This mosaic, when seen by daylight, would no doubt have disclosed to the sight, with much emblazonary and many colors, a gigantic coat-of-arms, in the Florentine fashion. Zig-zags of balustrades rose and fell, indicating stairs of terraces. Over the court frowned an immense pile of architecture, now shadowy and vague in the starlight. Intervals of sky, full of stars, marked out clearly the outline of the palace. An enormous roof could be seen, with the gable ends vaulted; garret windows, roofed over like vizors; chimneys like towers; and entablatures covered with motionless gods and goddesses.

Beyond the colonnade there played in the shadow one of those fairy fountains in which, as the water falls from basin to basin, it combines the beauty of rain with that of the cascade, and as if scattering the contents of a jewel box, flings to the wind its diamonds and its pearls as though to divert the statues around. Long rows of windows ranged away, separated by panoplies in relievo, and by busts on small pedestals. On the pinnacles, trophies and morions with plumes cut in stone, alternated with statues of heathen deities.

In the chamber where Gwynplaine was, on the side opposite the window, was a fireplace as high as the ceiling, and on another, under a dias one of those old spacious feudal beds which were reached by a ladder, and where you might sleep lying across; the joint-stool of the bed was at its side; a row of armchairs by the walls, and a row of ordinary chairs, in front of them, completed the furniture. The ceiling was domed. A great wood fire

in the French fashion blazed in the fireplace; by the richness of the flames, variegated of rose-color and green, a judge of such things would have seen that the wood was ash—a great luxury. The room was so large that the branches of candles failed to light it up. Here and there curtains over doors, falling and swaying, indicated communications with other rooms. The style of the room was altogether that of the reign of James I., —a style square and massive, antiquated and magnificent. Like the carpet and the lining of the chamber the dias, the baldachin, the bed, the stool, the curtains, the mantlepiece, the coverings of the table, the sofas, the chairs, were all of purple velvet.

There was no gilding, except on the ceiling. Laid on it, at equal distance from the four angles, was a huge round shield of embossed metal, on which sparkled, in dazzling relief, various coats of arms; among the devices, on two blazons, side by side, were to be distinguished the cap of a baron and the coronet of a marquis; were they of brass, or of silver-gilt? You could not tell. They seemed to be of gold. And in the centre of this lordly ceiling, like a gloomy and magnificent sky, the gleaming escutcheon was as the dark splendor of a sun shining in the night.

The savage, in whom is embodied the free man, is nearly as restless in a palace as in a prison. This magnificent chamber was depressing. So much splendor produces fear. Who could be the inhabitant of this stately palace? To what colossus did all this grandeur appertain? Of what lion is this the lair? Gwynplaine, as yet but half awake, was heavy at heart.

"Where am I," he said.

The man who was standing before him answered,—

"You are in your own house, my lord."

## CHAPTER IV.

### FASCINATION.

It takes time to rise to the surface. And Gwynplaine had been thrown into an abyss of stupefaction.

We do not gain our footing at once in unknown depths.

There are routs of ideas, as there are routs of armies. The rally is not immediate.

We feel as it were scattered; as though

some strange evaporation of self were taking place.

God is the arm. Chance is the sling. Man is the pebble. How are you to resist, once flung?

Gwynplaine, if we may coin the expression ricocheted from one surprise to another. After the love letter of the duchess came the revelation in the Southwark dungeon.

In destiny, when wonders begin, prepare yourself for blow upon blow. The gloomy portals once open, prodigies pour in. A breach once made in the wall, and events rush upon us pell mell. The marvellous never comes singly.

The marvellous is an obscurity. The shadow of this obscurity was over Gwynplaine. What was happening to him seemed unintelligible. He saw everything through the mist which a deep commotion leaves in the mind like the dust caused by a falling ruin. The shock had been from top to bottom. Nothing was clear to him. However, light always returns by degrees. The dust settles. Moment by moment the density of astonishment decreases, Gwynplaine was like a man with his eyes open and fixed in a dream, as if trying to see what may be in it. He dispersed the mist. Then he reshaped it. He had intermittances of wandering. He underwent that oscillation of the mind in the unforeseen, which alternately pushes us in the direction in which we understand, and throws us back in that which is incomprehensible. Who has not at some time felt this pendulum in his brain?

By degrees his thoughts dilated in the darkness of the event, as the pupil of his eye had done in the underground shadows at Southwark. The difficulty was to succeed in putting a certain space between accumulated sensations. Before that combustion of hazy ideas called comprehension can take place, air must be admitted between the emotions. There, air was wanting. The event, so to speak, could not be breathed.

In entering that terrible cell at Southwark, Gwynplaine had expected the iron collar of a felon; they had placed on his head the coronet of a peer. How could this be? There had not been space or time enough between what Gwynplaine had feared and what had really occurred; it had succeeded too quickly,—his terror changing into other feelings too abruptly for comprehension. The contrasts

were too tightly packed one against the other. Gwynplaine made an effort to withdraw his mind from the vice.

He was silent. This is the instinct of great stupefaction, which is more on the defensive than it is thought to be. Who says nothing is prepared for everything. A word of yours allowed to drop may be seized in some unknown system of wheels, and your utter destruction be compassed in its complex machinery.

The poor and weak live in terror of being crushed. The crowd ever expect to be trodden down. Gwynplaine had long been one of the crowd.

A singular state of human uneasiness, can be expressed by the words:—Let us see what will happen. Gwynplaine was in this state. You feel that you have not gained your equilibrium when an unexpected situation surges up under your feet. You watch for something which must produce a result. You are vaguely attentive. We will see what happens. What! You do not know. Whom? You watch.

The man with the paunch repeated, "You you are in your own house, my lord."

Gwynplaine felt himself. In surprise, we first look to make sure that things exist; then, we feel ourselves, to make sure that we exist ourselves. It was certainly to him that the words were spoken; but he himself was somebody else. He no longer had his jacket on, or his esclavine of leather. He had a waistcoat of cloth of silver: and a satin coat, which he touched and found to be embroidered. He felt a heavy purse in his waistcoat pocket. A pair of velvet trunk hose covered his clown's tights. He wore shoes with high red heels. As they had brought him to this palace, so had they changed his dress.

The man resumed,—

"Will your lordship deign to remember this: I am called Barkilphedro; I am clerk to the Admiralty. It was I who opened Hardquanon's flask, and drew your destiny out of it. Thus, in the 'Arabian Nights' a fisherman releases a giant from a bottle."

Gwynplaine fixed his eyes on the smiling face of the speaker.

Barkilphedro continued—

"Besides this palace, my lord, Hunkerville House, which is larger, is yours. Your own Clancharlie Castle, from which you take your title, and which was a fortress in the time of

Edward the Elder. You have nineteen bailiwicks belonging to you, with their villages and their inhabitants. This puts under your banner, as a landlord and nobleman, about eighty thousand vassals and tenants. As Clancharlie you are a judge—judge of all, both of goods and of persons, and you hold your baron's court. The king has no right which you have not, except the privilege of coining money. The king designated by the Norman law as chief signer, has justice, court, and gold. Coin is money. So that you, excepting in this last, are as much a king in your lordship as he is in his kingdom. You have the right, as a baron, to a gibbet with four pillars in England; and as a marquis, to a scaffold with seven posts in Sicily; that of the mere lord having two pillars; that of a lord of the manor, three; and that of a duke, eight. You are styled prince in the ancient charters of Northumberland. You are related to the Viscounts Valencia in Ireland, whose name is Power, and to the Earls of Umfraville, whose name is Angus. You are a chief of a clan, like Campbell, Ardmannach, and Macullummore. You have eight barons' courts: Reculver, Baston, Hell-Kerters, Homble, Moricambe, Grundraith, Trenwardraith, and others. You have a right over the turf-cutting of Pillinmore, and over the alabaster quarries near Trent. Moreover, you own all the country of Penneth Chase; and you have a mountain with an ancient town on it. The town is called Vinecaunton; the mountain is called Moil-enlli. All which gives you an income of forty thousand pounds a year. That is to say, forty times five-and-twenty thousand francs with which a Frenchman is satisfied."

Whilst Barkilphedro spoke, Gwynplaine, in a crescendo of stupor, remembered the past. Memory is a gulf that a word can move to its lowest depths. Gwynplaine knew all the words pronounced by Barkilphedro. They were written in the last lines of the two scrolls which lined the van in which his childhood had been passed, and from so often letting his eyes wander over them mechanically he knew them by heart. On reaching, a forsaken orphan, the travelling caravan at Weymouth, he had found the inventory of the inheritance which awaited him; and in the morning, when the poor little boy awoke the first thing spelt by his careless and unconscious eyes was his own title and its posses-

sions. It was a strange detail added to all his other surprises, that, during fifteen years, rolling from highway to highway, the clown of a travelling theatre, earning his bread day by day, picking up farthings and living on crumbs, he should have travelled with the inventory of his fortune placarded over his misery.

Barkilphedro touched the casket on the table with his forefinger.

"My lord, this casket contains two thousand guineas which her gracious majesty the queen has sent you for your present wants."

Gwynplaine made a movement.

"That shall be for my Father Ursus," he said.

"So be it, my lord," said Barkilphedro. "Ursus at the Tadcaster Inn. The Sergeant of the Coif, who accompanied us hither, and is about to return immediately, will carry them to him. Perhaps I may go to London myself. In that case I will take charge of it."

"I shall take them to him myself," said Gwynplaine.

Barkilphedro's smile disappeared, and he said,—

"Impossible!"

There is an impressive inflection of voice, which, as it were, underlines the words. Barkilphedro's tone was thus emphasized; he paused, so as to put a full stop after the word he had just uttered. Then he continued with the peculiar and respectful tone of a servant who feels that he is master,—

"My lord, you are twenty-three miles from London, at Corleone Lodge, your court residence, contiguous to the Royal Castle of Windsor. You are here unknown to anyone. You were brought here in a close carriage, which was awaiting you at the gate of the jail at Southwark. The servants who introduced you into this palace are ignorant who you are; but they know me, and that is sufficient. You may possibly have been brought to these apartments by means of a private key which is in my possession. There are people in the house asleep, and it is not an hour to awaken them. Hence we have time for an explanation, which, nevertheless, will be short. I have been commissioned by her majesty—"

As he spoke, Barkilphedro began to turn over the leaves of some bundles of papers which were lying near the casket.

"My lord, here is your patent of peerage. Here is that of your Sicilian marquisate. These are the parchments and title-deeds of your eight baronies, with the seals of eleven kings from Baldret, King of Kent, to James the Sixth of Scotland, and first of England and Scotland united. Here are your letters of precedence. Here are your rent-rolls, and titles and descriptions of your fiefs, freeholds, dependencies, lands, and domains. That which you see above your head in the emblazonment on the ceiling are your two coronets: the circlet with pearls for the baron, and the circlet with the strawberry leaves for the marquis.

"Here, in the wardrobe, is your peer's robe of red velvet, bordered with ermine. To-day, only a few hours since, the Lord Chancellor and the Deputy Earl Marshal of England, informed of the result of your confrontation with the Comprachico Hardquanonne, have taken her majesty's commands. Her majesty has signed them, according to her royal will, which is the same as the law. All formalities have been complied with. To-morrow, and no later than to-morrow, you will take your seat in the House of Lords, where they have for some days been deliberating on a bill, presented by the Crown, having for its object the augmentation, by a hundred thousand pounds sterling yearly, of the annual allowance to the Duke of Cumberland, husband of the queen. You will be able to take part in the debate."

Barkilphedro paused, breathed slowly, and resumed.

"However, nothing is yet settled. A man cannot be made a peer of England without his own consent. All can be annulled and disappear, unless you acquiesce. An event nipped in the bud ere it ripens often occurs in state policy. My lord, up to this time silence has been preserved on what has occurred. The House of Lords will not be informed of the facts until to-morrow. Secrecy has been kept about the whole matter for reasons of state, which are of such importance, that the influential persons who alone are at this moment cognizant of your existence, and of your rights, will forget them immediately should reasons of state command their being forgotten. That which is in darkness may remain in darkness. It is easy to wipe you out; the more so as you have a brother, the natural son of your father and

of a woman who afterwards, during the exile of your father, became mistress to King Charles II., which accounts for your brother's high position at court; for it is to this brother, bastard though he be, that your peerage would revert. Do you wish this? I cannot think so. Well, all depends on you. The queen must be obeyed. You will not quit the house till to-morrow in a royal carriage, and to go to the House of Lords. My lord, will you be a peer of England; yes or no? The queen has designs for you. She destines you for an alliance almost royal. Lord Fermain Clancharlie, this is the decisive moment. Destiny never opens one door without shutting another. After a certain step in advance, to step back is impossible. Who so enters into transfiguration, leaves behind him evanescence. My lord, Gwynplaine is dead. Do you understand?"

Gwynplaine trembled from head to foot.

Then he recovered himself.

"Yes," he said.

Barkilphedro, smiling; bowed, placed the casket under his cloak, and left the room.

## CHAPTER V.

WE THINK WE REMEMBER; WE FORGET.

WHENCE arise those strange, visible changes which occur in the soul of man?

Gwynplaine had been at the same moment raised to a summit and cast into an abyss.

His head swam with double giddiness. The giddiness of ascent and descent. A fatal combination.

He felt himself ascend, and felt not his fall.

It is appalling to see a new horizon.

A perspective affords suggestions,—not always good ones.

He had before him the fairy glade, a snare perhaps, seen through opening clouds, and showing the blue depths of sky; so deep, that they are obscure.

He was on the mountain, whence he could see all the kingdoms of the earth. A mountain all the more terrible that it is a visionary one. Those who are on its apex are in a dream.

Palaces, castles, power, opulence, all human happiness extending as far as eye could reach; a map of enjoyments spread out to the horizon; a sort of radiant geography of which he was the centre. A perilous mirage!



Imagine what must have been the haze of such a vision, not led up to, not attained to as by the gradual steps of a ladder, but reached without transition and without previous warning.

A man going to sleep in a mole's burrow, and awaking on the top of the Strasbourg steeple; such was the state of Gwynplaine.

Giddiness is a dangerous kind of glare, particularly that which bears you at once towards the day and towards the night, forming two whirlwinds, one opposed to the other.

He saw too much, and not enough.

He saw all, and nothing.

His state was what the author of this book has somewhere expressed as the blind man dazzled.

Gwynplaine, left by himself, began to walk with long strides. A bubbling precedes an explosion.

Notwithstanding his agitation, in this impossibility of keeping still, he meditated. His mind liquefied as it boiled. He began to recall things to his memory. It is surprising how we find that we have heard so clearly that to which we scarcely listened. The declaration of the shipwrecked men, read by the sheriff in the Southwark cell, came back to him clearly and intelligibly. He recalled every word, he saw under it his whole infancy.

Suddenly he stopped, his hands clasped behind his back, looking up to the ceiling—the sky—no matter what—whatever was above him.

“Quits!” he cried.

“He felt like one whose head rises out of the water. It seemed to him that he saw everything—the past, the future, the present—in the accession of a sudden flash of light.

“Oh!” he cried, for there are cries in the depths of thought. “Oh! it was so, was it! I was a lord. All is discovered. They stole, betrayed, destroyed, abandoned, disinherited, murdered me! The corpse of my destiny floated fifteen years on the sea; all at once it touched the earth, and it started up, erect and living. I am reborn. I am born. I felt under my rags that the breast there palpitating was not that of a wretch; and when I looked on crowds of men, I felt that they were the flocks, and that I was not the dog, but the shepherd! Shepherds of the people, leaders of men, guides and masters, such were my fathers; and what they were I am! I am

a gentleman, and I have a sword; I am a baron, and I have a casque; I am a marquis, and I have a plume; I am a peer, and I have a coronet. Lo! they deprived me of all this. I dwelt in light, they flung me into darkness. Those who proscribed the father, sold the son. When my father was dead, they took from beneath his head the stone of exile which he had placed for his pillow, and, tying it to my neck, they flung me into a sewer. Oh! those scoundrels who tortured my infancy! Yes, they rise and move in the depths of my memory. Yes; I see them again. I was that morsel of flesh pecked to pieces on a tomb by a flight of crows. I bled and cried under all those horrible shadows. Lo! it was there that they precipitated me, under the crush of those who come and go, under the trampling feet of men, under the undermost of the human race, lower than the serf, baser than the serving man, lower than the felon, lower than the slave, at the spot where Chaos becomes a sewer, in which I was engulfed. Is it from thence that I come; it is from this that I rise; it is from this that I am risen. And here I am now. Quits!”

He sat down, he rose, clasped his head with his hands, began to pace the room again, and his tempestuous monologue continued within him.

“Where am I?—on the summit! Where is it that I have just alighted?—on the highest peak! This pinnacle, this grandeur, this dome of the world, this great power, is my home. This temple is in air. I am one of the gods. I live in inaccessible heights. This supremacy, which I looked up to from below, and from whence emanated such rays of glory that I shut my eyes; this ineffaceable peerage; this impregnable fortress of the fortunate, I enter. I am in it. I am of it. Ah, what a decisive turn of the wheel! I was below, I am on high—on high for ever! Behold me a lord! I shall have a scarlet robe. I shall have an earl's coronet on my head. I shall assist at the coronation of kings. They will take the oath from my hands. I shall judge princes and ministers. I shall exist. From the depths into which I was thrown, I have rebounded to the zenith. I have palaces in town and country: houses, gardens, chases, forests, carriages, millions. I will give fêtes. I will make laws. I shall have the choice of joys and pleasures. And

the vagabond Gwynplane, who had not the right to gather a flower in the grass, may pluck the stars from heaven!"

Melancholy overshadowing of a soul's brightness! Thus it was that in Gwynplane, who had been a hero, and perhaps had not ceased to be one, moral greatness gave way to material splendor. A lamentable transition! Virtue broken down by a troop of passing demons. A surprise made on the weak side of man's fortress. All the inferior circumstances called by men superior, ambition, the purblind desires of instinct, passions, covetousness, driven far from Gwynplane by the wholesome restraints of misfortune, took tumultuous possession of his generous heart. And from what had this arisen? From the discovery of a parchment in a waif drifted by the sea. Conscience may be violated by a chance attack.

Gwynplane drank in great draughts of pride, and it dulled his soul. Such is the poison of that fatal wine.

Giddiness invaded him. He more than consented to its approach. He welcomed it. This was the effect of previous and long-continued thirst. Are we an accomplice of the cup which deprives us of reason? He had always vaguely desired this. His eyes had always turned towards the great. To watch is to wish. The eaglet is not born in the eyrie for nothing.

Now, however, at moments, it seemed to him the simplest thing in the world that he should be a lord. A few hours only had passed, and yet the past of yesterday seemed so far off! Gwynplane had fallen into the ambushade of Better, who is the enemy of Good.

Unhappy is he of whom we say, how lucky he is! Adversity is more easily resisted than prosperity. We rise more perfect from ill fortune than from good. There is a Charybdis in poverty, and a Scylla in riches. Those who remain erect under the thunderbolt are prostrated by the flash. Thou who standest without shrinking on the verge of a precipice, fear lest thou be carried up on the innumerable wings of mists and dreams. The ascent which elevates will dwarf thee. An apotheosis has a sinister power of degradation.

It is not easy to understand what is good luck. Chance is nothing but a disguise. Nothing deceives so much as the face of fortune. Is she Providence? Is she Fatality?

A brightness may not be a brightness, because light is truth, and a gleam may be a deceit. You believe that it lights you; but no, it sets you on fire.

At night—a candle made of mean tallow becomes a star if placed in an opening in the darkness. The moth flies to it.

In what measure is the moth responsible. The sight of the candle fascinates the moth as the eye of the serpent fascinates the bird.

Is it possible that the bird and the moth should resist the attraction? Is it possible that the leaf should resist the wind? Is it possible that the stone should refuse obedience to the laws of gravitation?

These are material questions, which are moral questions as well.

After he had received the letter of the duchess, Gwynplane had recovered himself. The deep love in his nature had resisted it. But the storm having wearied itself on one side of the horizon, burst out on the other, for in destiny, as in nature, there are successive convulsions. The first shock loosens, the second uproots.

Alas! how do the oaks fall.

Thus he who, when a child of ten, stood alone on the shore of Portland, ready to give battle, who had looked steadfastly at all the combatants whom he had to encounter, the blast which bore away the vessel in which he had expected to embark, the gulf which had swallowed up the plank, the yawning abyss, of which the menace was its retrocession, the earth which refused him a shelter, the sky which refused him a star, solitude without pity, obscurity without notice, ocean, sky, all the violence of one infinite space, and all the mysterious enigmas of another; he who had neither trembled nor fainted before the mighty hostility of the unknown; he, who still so young, had held his own with night, as Hercules of old had held his own with death; he who in the unequal struggle had thrown down this defiance, that he, a child, adopted a child, that he encumbered himself with a load, when tired and exhausted, thus rendering himself an easier prey to the attacks on his weakness, and, as it were, himself unmuzzling the shadowy monsters in ambush around him—he who, a precocious warrior, had immediately, and and from his first steps out of the cradle, struggled breast to breast with destiny; he

whose disproportion with strife had not discouraged from striving; he, who, perceiving in everything around him a frightful occultation of the human race, had accepted that eclipse, and proudly continued his journey; he who had known how to endure cold, thirst, hunger, valiantly; he who, a pigmy in stature, had been a colossus in soul: this Gwynplaine, who had conquered the great terror of the abyss under its double form, Tempest and Misery, staggered under a breath—Van-ity.

Thus, when she has exhausted distress, nakedness, storms, catastrophies, agonies on an unflinching man, Fatality begins to smile and her victim, suddenly intoxicated staggers.

The smile of fatality! Can anything more terrible be imagined! It is the last resource of a pitiless trier of souls in his proof of man. The tiger, lurking in destiny caresses man with a velvet paw. Sinister preparation, hideous gentleness in the monster!

Every self-observer has detected within himself mental weakness coincident with aggrandisement. A sudden growth disturbs the system, and produces fever.

In Gwynplaine's brain was the giddy whirlwind of a crowd of new circumstances; all the light and shade of a metamorphosis; inexpressibly strange confrontations; the shock of the past against the future. Two Gwynplaines, himself doubled; behind, an infant in rags crawling through night—wandering, shivering, hungry, provoking laughter; in front, a brilliant nobleman—luxurious, proud, dazzling all London. He was casting off one form and amalgamating himself with the other. He was casting the Mountebank, and becoming the peer. Change of skin is sometimes change of soul. Now and then the past seemed like a dream. It was complex; bad and good. He thought of his father. It was a poignant anguish never to have known his father. He tried to picture him to himself. He thought of his brother, of whom he had just heard. Then he had a family! He Gwynplaine! He lost himself in fantastic dreams. He saw visions of magnificence; unknown forms of solemn grandeur moved in mist before him. He heard flourishes of trumpets.

"And then," he said "I shall be eloquent."

He pictured to himself a splendid entrance

into the House of Lords. He should arrive full to the brim with new facts and ideas. What could he not tell them? What subjects he had accumulated! What an advantage to be in the midst of them, a man who had seen, touched, undergone, and suffered; who could cry aloud to them, "I have been near to everything, from which you are so far removed." He would hurl reality in the face of those patricians, crammed with illusions. They should tremble, for it would be the truth. They would applaud, for it would be grand. He would arise amongst those powerful men, more powerful than they. "I shall appear as a torch-bearer, to show them truth; and as a sword-bearer, to show them justice!" What a triumph!

And, building up these fantasies in his mind, clear and confused at the same time, he had attacks of delirium,—sinking on the first seat he came to; sometimes drowsy, sometimes starting up. He came and went, looked at the ceiling, examined the coronets, studied vaguely the hieroglyphics of the emblazonment, felt the velvet of the walls, moved the chairs, turned over the parchments, read the names, spelt out the titles, Buxton, Homble, Grundraith, Hunkerville, Clancharlie; compared the wax, the impression, felt the twist of silk appended to the royal privy seal, approached the window, listened to the splash of the fountain, contemplated the statues, counted, with the patience of a somnambulist, the columns of marble and said,—

"It is real."

Then he touched his satin clothes, and asked himself,—

"Is it I? Yes."

He was torn by an inward tempest.

In this whirlwind, did he feel faintness and fatigue? Did he drink, eat, sleep? If he did so, he was unconscious of the fact. In certain violent situations instinct satisfies itself, according to its requirements, unconsciously. Besides, his thoughts were less thoughts than mists. At the moment that the black flame of an irruption disgorges itself from depths full of boiling lava, has the crater any consciousness of the flocks which crop the cross at the foot of the mountain?

The hours passed.

The dawn appeared, and brought the day. A bright ray penetrated the chamber, and at

the same instant broke on the soul of Gwynplaine,

And Dea! said the light.

## BOOK THE SIXTH.

### URSUS UNDER DIFFERENT ASPECTS.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### WHAT THE MISANTHROPE SAID.

AFTER Ursus had seen Gwynplaine thrust within the gates of Southwark jail, he remained, haggard, in the corner from which he was watching. For a long time his ears were haunted by the grinding of the bolts and bars, which was like a howl of joy that one wretch more should be enclosed within them.

He waited. What for? He watched. What for? Such inexorable doors, once shut, do not reopen so soon. They are tongued by their stagnation in darkness, and move with difficulty, especially when they have to give up a prisoner. Entrance is permitted. Exit is quite a different matter. Ursus knew this. But waiting is a thing which we have not the power to give up at our own will. We wait in our own despite. What we do disengages an acquired force, which maintains its action when its object has ceased, which keeps possession of us and holds us, and obliges us for some time longer to continue that which has already lost its motive. Hence the useless watch, the inert position that we have all held at times, the loss of time which every thoughtful man gives mechanically to that which has disappeared. None escapes this law. We become stubborn in a sort of a vague fury. We know not why we are in the place, but we remain there. That which we have begun actively, we continue passively, with an exhausting tenacity from which we emerge overwhelmed. Ursus, though differing from other men, was, as any other might have been, nailed to his post by that species of conscious reverie into which we are plunged by events all important to us, and in which we are impotent. He scrutinised by turns those two black walls, now the high one, then the low; sometimes he door near which the ladder to the gibbet stood, then that surmounted by a death's head. It was as if he were caught in a vice,

composed of a prison and a cemetery. This shunned and unpopular street was so deserted that he was unobserved.

At length he left the arch under which he had taken shelter, a kind of chance sentry-box in which he had acted the watchman, and departed with slow steps. The day was declining, for his guard had been long. From time to time he turned his head and looked at the fearful wicket through which Gwynplaine had disappeared. His eyes were glassy and dull. He reached the end of the alley, entered another, then another, retracting almost unconsciously the road which he had taken some hours before. At intervals he turned, as if he could still see the door of the prison, though he was no longer in the street in which the jail was situated. Step by step he was approaching Tarrinzean Field. The lanes in the neighborhood of the fair-ground were deserted pathways between enclosed gardens. He walked along, his head down, by the hedges and ditches. All at once, he halted, and drawing himself up, exclaimed, "So much the better!"

At the same time he struck his fist twice on his head and twice on his thigh, thus proving himself to be a sensible fellow, who saw things in their right light; and then he began to growl inwardly, yet now and then raising his voice.

"It is all right! Oh, the scoundrel! the thief! the vagabond! the worthless fellow! the seditious scamp! It is his speeches about the government that have sent him there. He is a rebel. I was harboring a rebel. I am free of him, and lucky for me; he was compromising us. Thrust into prison! Oh, so much the better! What excellent laws! Ungrateful boy! I who brought him up! To give oneself so much trouble for this! Why should he want to speak and to reason? He mixed himself up in politics. The ass! As he handled pennies he babbled about the taxes, about the poor, about the people, about what was no business of his. He permitted himself to make reflections on pennies. He commented wickedly and maliciously on the copper money of the kingdom. He insulted the farthings of her Majesty. A farthing! Why, 'tis the same as the queen. A sacred effigy! Devil take it! a sacred effigy! Have we a queen, yes or no? Then respect her verdigris! Everything depends on the government: one ought to know that. I

have experience, I have. I know something. They may say to me, But you give up politics, then? Politics, my friends, I care as much for them as for the rough hide of an ass. I received, one day, a blow from a baronet's cane. I said to myself, that is enough. I understand politics. The people have but a farthing, they give it; the queen takes it, the people thank her. Nothing can be more natural. It is for the peers to arrange the rest; their lordships, the lords spiritual and temporal. Oh, so Gwynplaine is locked up! So he is in prison. That is just as it should be. It is equitable, excellent, well-merited, and legitimate. It is his own fault. To criticise is forbidden. Are you a lord, you idiot? The constable has seized him, the justice of the quorum has carried him off, the sheriff has him in custody. At this moment he is probably being examined by a serjeant of the coif. They pluck out your crimes, those clever fellows! Imprisoned, my wag! So much the worse for him, so much the better for me! Faith, I am satisfied. I own frankly that fortune favors me. Of what folly was I guilty when I picked up that little boy and girl! We were so quiet before, *Homo* and I! What had they to do in my caravan, the little blackguards? Didn't I brood over them when they were young! Didn't I draw them along with my harness! Pretty foundlings, indeed; he as ugly as sin, and she blind of both eyes! Where was the use of depriving myself of everything for their sakes? The beggars grow up, forsooth, and make love to each other. The flirtations of the deformed! It was to that we had come. The toad and the mole; quite an idyl! That was what went on in my household. All of which was sure to end by going before the justice. The toad talked politics! But now I am free of him. When the wapentake came I was at first a fool; one always doubts one's own good luck. I believed that I did not see what I did see; that it was impossible, that it was a nightmare, that a day-dream was playing me a trick. But no! Nothing could be truer. It is all clear. Gwynplaine is really in prison. It is a stroke of Providence. Praise be to it! He was the monster who, with the row he made, drew attention to my establishment, and denounced my poor wolf. Be off, Gwynplaine; and, see, I am rid of both! Two birds killed with one stone.

Because Dea will die, now that she can no longer see Gwynplaine. For she sees him, the idiot! She will have no object in life. She will say, 'What am I to do in the world?' Good-bye! To the devil with both of them. I always hated the creatures! Die, Dea! Oh, I am quite comfortable!

## CHAPTER II.

### WHAT HE DID.

HE returned to the Tadcaster Inn.

It struck half-past six. It was a little before twilight.

Master Nicless stood on his doorstep.

He had not succeeded, since the morning, in extinguishing the terror which still showed on his scared face.

He perceived Ursus from afar.

"Well!" he cried.

"Well! what?"

"Is Gwynplaine coming back? It is full time. The public will soon be coming. Shall we have the performance of 'The Laughing Man' this evening?"

"I am the laughing man," said Ursus.

And he looked at the tavern-keeper with a loud chuckle.

Then he went up to the first floor, opened the window next to the sign of the inn, leant over towards the placard about Gwynplaine, the laughing man, and the bill of "Chaos Vanquished;" unnailed the one, tore down the other, put both under his arm, and descended.

Master Nicless followed him with his eyes.

"Why do you unhook that?"

Ursus burst into a second fit of laughter.

"Why do you laugh?" said the tavern keeper.

"I am reentering private life.

Master Nicless understood, and gave an order to his lieutenant, the boy Govicum, to announce to every one who should come that there would be no performance that evening. He took from the door the box made out of a cask, where they received the entrance money, and rolled it into a corner of the lower sitting-room.

A moment after, Ursus entered the Green Box.

He put the two signs away in a corner, and entered what he called the woman's wing.

Dea was asleep.

She was on her bed, dressed as usual, excepting that the body of her gown was loosened, as when she was taking her siesta.

Near her Vinos and Fibi were sitting—one on a stool, the other on the ground—musing. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, they had not dressed themselves in their goddesses' gauze, which was a sign of deep discouragement. They had remained in their drugget petticoats, and their dress of coarse cloth.

Ursus looked at Dea.

"She is rehearsing for a longer sleep," murmured he.

Then, addressing Fibi and Vinos,—

"You both know all. The music is over. You may put your trumpets into the drawer. You did well not to equip yourselves as deities. You look ugly enough as you are, but you were quite right. Keep on your petticoats—no performance to-night, nor to-morrow, nor the day after to-morrow. No Gwynplaine. Gwynplaine is clean gone."

Then he looked at Dea again.

"What a blow to her this will be! It will be like blowing out a candle."

He inflated his cheeks.

"Puff! nothing more."

Then, with a little dry laugh,—

"Losing Gwynplaine, she loses all. It would be just as if I were to lose Homo. It will be worse. She will feel more lonely than any one else could. The blind wade through more sorrow than we do."

He looked out of the window at the end of the room.

"How the days lengthen! It is not dark at seven o'clock. Nevertheless, we will light up."

He struck the steel and lighted the lamp which hung from the ceiling of the Green Box.

Then he leaned over Dea.

"She will catch cold; you have unlaced her bodice too low. There is a proverb,

'Though April skies be bright,  
Keep all your wrappers tight.'"

Seeing a pin shining on the floor, he picked it up, and pinned up her sleeve. Then he paced the Green Box, gesticulating.

"I am in full possession of my faculties. I am lucid, quite lucid. I consider this occurrence quite proper, and I approve of what has happened. When she awakes I will ex-

plain everything to her clearly. The catastrophe will not be long in coming. No more Gwynplaine. Good-night, Dea. How well all has been arranged! Gwynplaine in prison, Dea in the cemetery, they will be *vis-à-vis*! A dance of death! Two destinies going off the stage at once. Pack up the dresses. Fasten the valise. For valise, read coffin. It was just what was best for them both. Dea without eyes, Gwynplaine without a face. On high the Almighty will restore sight to Dea and beauty to Gwynplaine. Death puts things to rights. All will be well. Fibi, Vinos, hang up your tambourines on the nail. Your talents for noise will go to rust; my beauties, no more playing, no more trumpeting. 'Chaos Vanquished' is vanquished. 'The Laughing Man' is done for. 'Tarantantara' is dead. Dea sleeps on. She does well. If I were she I would never awake! Oh! she will soon fall asleep again. A skylark like her takes very little killing. This comes of meddling with politics. What a lesson! Governments are right. Gwynplaine to the sheriff. Dea to the gravedigger. Parallel cases! Instructive symmetry! I hope the tavern-keeper has barred the door. We are going to die to-night quietly at home, between ourselves—not I, nor Homo, but Dea. As for me, I shall continue to roll on in the caravan. I belong to the meanderings of vagabond life. I shall dismiss these two women. I shall not keep even one of them. I have a tendency to become an old scoundrel. A maid servant in the house of a libertine is like a loaf of bread on the shelf. I decline the temptation. It is not becoming at my age. *Turpe senilis amor*. I will follow my way alone with Homo. How astonished Homo will be. Where is Gwynplaine? Where is Dea? Old comrade, here we are once more alone together. Plague take it! I'm delighted. Their bucolics were an encumbrance. Oh! that scamp Gwynplaine, who is never coming back. He has left us stuck here. I say All right. And now 'tis Dea's turn. That won't be long. I like things to be done with. I would not snap my fingers to stop her dying—her dying! I tell you! See, she awakes!"

Dea opened her eyelids; many blind persons shut them when they sleep. Her sweet unwitting face wore all its usual radiance.

"She smiles," whispered Ursus, "and I laugh. That is as it should be."

Dea called,—

"Fibi! Vinos! It must be the time for the performance. I think I have been asleep a long time. Come and dress me."

Neither Fibi nor Vinos moved.

Meanwhile, the ineffable blind look of Dea's eyes met those of Ursus. He started.

"Well!" he cried; "what are you about? Vinos! Fibi! Do you not hear your mistress? Are you deaf? Quick! the play is going to begin."

The two women looked at Ursus in stupefaction.

Ursus shouted,—

"Do you not hear the audience coming in?"

Fibi, dress Dea. Vinos, take your tambourine."

Fibi was obedient. Vinos, passive. Together, they personified submission. Their master, Ursus, had always been to them an enigma. Never to be understood is a reason for being always obeyed. They simply thought he had gone mad, and did as they were told. Fibi took down the costume, and Vinos the tambourine.

Fibi began to dress Dea. Ursus let down the door-curtain of the women's room, and from behind the curtain continued,—

"Look there, Gwynplaine! the court is already more than half full of people. They are in heaps in the passages. What a crowd! And you say that Fibi and Vinos look as if they did not see them. How stupid the gypsies are! What fools they are in Egypt! Don't lift the curtain from the door. Be decent. Dea is dressing."

He paused, and suddenly they heard an exclamation,—

"How beautiful Dea is!"

It was the voice of Gwynplaine.

Fibi and Vinos started, and turned round. It was the voice of Gwynplaine, but in the mouth of Ursus.

Ursus, by a sign which he made through the door ajar, forbade the expression of any astonishment.

Then, again taking the voice of Gwynplaine,—

"Angel!"

Then he replied in his own voice,—

"Dea an angel! You are a fool, Gwynplaine. No mammifer can fly except the bats."

And he added:

"Look here, Gwynplaine! Let Homo loose: that will be more to the purpose."

And he descended the ladder of the Green Box very quickly, with the agile spring of Gwynplaine, imitating his step so that Dea could hear it.

In the court he addressed the boy, whom the occurrences of the day had made idle and inquisitive.

"Spread out both your hands," said he, in a loud voice.

And he poured a handful of pence into them.

Govicum was grateful for his munificence.

Ursus whispered in his ear,—

"Boy, go into the yard; jump, dance, knock, bawl, whistle, coo, neigh, applaud, stamp your feet, burst out laughing, break something."

Master Nicless, saddened and humiliated at seeing the folks who had come to see "The Laughing Man" turned back and crowding towards other caravans, had shut the door of the inn. He had even given up the idea of selling any beer or spirits that evening, that he might have to answer no awkward questions; and, quite overcome by the sudden close of the performance, was looking, with his candle in his hand, into the court from the balcony above.

Ursus, taking the precaution of putting his voice between parentheses fashioned by adjusting the palms of his hand to his mouth, cried out to him,—

"Sir! do as your boy is doing; yelp, bark, howl."

He reascended the steps of the Green Box, and said to the wolf,—

"Talk as much as you can."

Then, raising his voice,—

"What a crowd there is! We shall have a crammed performance."

In the meantime Vinos played the tambourine. Ursus went on,—

"Dea is dressed. Now we can begin. I am sorry they have admitted so many spectators. How thickly packed they are! Look, Gwynplaine, what a mad mob it is. I will bet that to-day we shall take more money than we have ever done yet. Come, gypsies, play up, both of you. Come here. Fibi, take your clarion. Good. Vinos, drum on your tambourine. Fling it up and catch it again. Fibi, put yourself into the attitude of Fame. Young ladies, you have too much on. Take off those jackets. Replace stuff

by gauze. The public like to see the female form exposed. Let the moralists thunder. A little indecency. Devil take it! What of that? Look voluptuous, and rush into wild melodies. Snort, blow, whistle, flourish, play the tambourine. What a number of people; my poor Gwynplaine!"

He interrupted himself.

"Gwynplaine, help me. Let down the platform." He spread out his pocket-handkerchief. "But first let me roar in my rag," and he blew his nose violently, as a ventriloquist ought. Having returned his handkerchief to his pocket, he drew the pegs out of the pulleys, which creaked as usual as the platform was let down.

"Gwynplaine, do not draw the curtain until the performance begins. We are not alone. You two come on in front. Music, ladies, tum, tum, tum. A pretty audience we have! the dregs of the people. Good heavens!"

The two gypsies, stupidly obedient, placed themselves in their usual corners of the platform. Then Ursus became wonderful. It was no longer a man, but a crowd. Obligated to make abundance out of emptiness, he called to aid his prodigious powers of ventriloquism. The whole orchestra of human and animal voices which was within him, he called into tumult at once.

He was legion. Any one with his eyes closed would have imagined that he was in a public place on some day of rejoicing, or in some sudden popular riot. A whirlwind of clamor proceeded from Ursus; he sang, he shouted, he talked, he coughed, he spat, he sneezed, took snuff, talked and responded, put questions and gave answers, all at once. The half uttered syllables ran one into another. In the court, untenanted by a single spectator, were heard, men, women, and children. It was a clear confusion of tumult. Strange laughter wound, vapor-like, through the noise, the chirping of birds, the swearing of cats, the wailings of children at the breast. The indistinct tones of drunken men were to be heard, and the growls of dogs under the feet of people who stamped on them. The cries came from far and near, from top to bottom, from the upper boxes to the pit. The whole was an uproar, the detail was a cry. Ursus clapped his hands, stamped his feet, threw his voice to the end of the court, and then made it come from underground.

It was both stormy and familiar. It passed from a murmur to a noise, from a noise to a tumult, from a tumult to a tempest. He was himself, any, every, one else. Alone and polyglot. As there are optical illusions, there are also auricular illusions. That which Proteus did to sight, Ursus did to hearing. Nothing could be more marvellous than his fac-simile of multitude. From time to time he opened the door of the women's apartment and looked at Dea. Dea was listening. On his part the boy exerted himself to the utmost. Vinos and Fibi trumpeted conscientiously, and took turns with the tambourine. Master Nicless, the only spectator, quietly made himself the same explanation as they did, that Ursus was gone mad, which was, for that matter, but another sad item added to his misery. The good tavern-keeper growled out, what insanity! And he was serious as a man might well be who has the fear of the law before him.

Govicum, delighted at being able to help in making a noise, exerted himself almost as much as Ursus. It amused him, and, moreover, it earned him pence.

Homo was pensive.

In the midst of the tumult Ursus now and then uttered such words as these:—"Just as usual, Gwynplaine. There is a cabal against us. Our rivals are undermining our success. Tumult is the seasoning of triumph. Besides there are too many people. They are uncomfortable. The angles of their neighbor's elbows do not dispose them to good nature. I hope the benches will not give way. We shall be the victims of an incensed population. Oh! if our friend Tom-Jim-Jack were only here! but he never comes now. Look at those heads rising one above another. Those who are forced to stand don't look very well pleased, though the great Galen pronounced it to be strengthening. We shall shorten the entertainment; as only 'Chaos Vanquished' was announced in the playbill, we will not play 'Ursus Rursus.' There will be something gained in that. What an uproar! O blind turbulence of the masses. They will do us some damage. However, they can't go on like this. We should not be able to play. No one can catch a word of the piece. I am going to address them. Gwynplaine, draw the curtain a little aside.—Gentlemen." Here Ursus addressed himself with a shrill and feeble voice,—



"Down with that old fool!"

Then he answered in his own voice,—

"It seems that the mob insult me. Cicero is right; *plebs fex urbis*. Never mind, we will admonish the mob, though I shall have a great deal of trouble to make myself heard. I will speak, notwithstanding. Man, do your duty. Gwynplaine, look at that scold grinding her teeth down there.

Ursus made a pause, in which he placed a gnashing of his teeth, Homo, provoked, added a second, and Govicum a third.

Ursus went on:

"The women are worse than the men. The moment is unpropitious, but it doesn't matter! Let us try the power of a speech; an eloquent speech is never out of place. Listen, Gwynplaine, to my attractive exordium. Ladies and gentlemen, I am a bear. I take off my head to address you. I humbly appeal to you for silence." Ursus, lending a cry to the crowd, said, "Grumphll!"

Then he continued:

"I respect my audience. Grumphll is an epiphonema as good as any other welcome. You growlers. That you are all of the dregs of the people, I do not doubt. That in no way diminishes my esteem for you. A well-considered esteem. I have a profound respect for the bullies who honor me with their custom. There are deformed folks amongst you. They give me no offence. The lame and the humpbacked are works of nature. The camel is gibbous. The bison's back is humped. The badger's left legs are shorter than the right. That fact is decided by Aristotle, in his treatise on the walking of animals. There are those amongst you who have but two shirts, one on his back, and the other at the pawnbroker's. I know that to be true. Albuquerque payned his moustache, and St. Denis his glory. The Jews advanced money on the glory. Great examples. To have debts is to have something. I revere your beggardom."

Ursus cut short his speech: interrupting it in a deep bass voice by the shout:

"Triple ass!"

And he answered in his politest accent,—

"I admit it. I am a learned man. I do my best to apologize for it. I scientifically despise science. Ignorance is a reality on which we feed; science a reality on which we starve. In general one is obliged to choose between two things. To be learned and grow

thin, or to browse and be an ass. O gentlemen! browse! Science is not worth a mouthful of anything nice. I had rather eat a sirloin of beef than know what they call the psoas muscle. I have but one merit. A dry eye. Such as you see me, I have never wept. It must be owned that I have never been satisfied—never satisfied, not even with myself. I despise myself; but I submit this to the members of the opposition here present,—if Ursus is only a learned man, Gwynplaine is an artist."

He groaned again,

"Grumphll!"

And resumed:

"Grumphll again! it is an objection. All the same, I pass it over. Near Gwynplaine, gentlemen and ladies, is another artist, a valued and distinguished personage who accompanies us. His lordship Homo, formerly a wild dog, now a civilized wolf, and a faithful subject of her Majesty's. Homo is a mine of deep and superior talent. Be attentive and watch. You are going to see Homo play as well as Gwynplaine, and you must do honor to art. That is an attribute of great nations. Are you men of the woods? I admit the fact. In that case, *sylvæ sint consule dignæ*. Two artists are well worth one consul. All right! Some one has flung a cabbage stalk at me, but did not hit me. That will not stop my speaking; on the contrary, a danger evaded makes folks garrulous, *Garrula pericula*, says Juvenal. My hearers! there are amongst you drunken men and drunken women. Very well. The men are unwholesome. The women are hideous. You have all sorts of excellent reasons for stowing yourselves away here on the benches of the pot-house. Want of work, idleness, the spare time between two robberies, porter, ale, stout, malt, brandy, gin, and the attraction of one sex for the other. What could be better? A wit prone to irony would find this a fair field. But I abstain. 'Tis luxury; so be it; but even an orgy should be kept within bounds. You are gay, but noisy. You imitate successfully the cries of beasts; but what would you say, if, when you were making love to a lady, I passed my time in barking at you. It would disturb you, and so it disturbs me. I order you to hold your tongues. Art is as respectable as a debauch. I speak to you civilly."

He apostrophized himself,—

"May the fever strangle you, with your eyebrows like the beard of rye."

And he replied,—

"Honorable gentlemen, let the rye alone. It is impious to insult the vegetables, by likening them either to human creatures or animals. Besides, the fever does not strangle. 'Tis a false metaphor. For pity's sake keep silence. Allow me to tell you that you are slightly wanting in the repose which characterizes the true English gentleman. I see that some amongst you who have shoes out of which their toes are peeping, take advantage of the circumstance to rest their feet on the shoulders of those who are in front of them, causing the ladies to remark that the soles of shoes divide always at the part at which is the head of the metatarsal bones. Show more of your hands, and less of your feet. I perceive scamps who plunge their ingenious fists into the pockets of their foolish neighbors. Dear pickpockets, have a little modesty. Fight those next to you if you like; do not plunder them. You will vex them less by blackening an eye, than by lightening their purses of a penny. Break their noses if you like. The shopkeeper thinks more of his money than of his beauty. Barring this, accept my sympathies, for I am not pedantic enough to blame thieves. Evil exists. Every one endures it, every one inflicts it. No one is exempt from the vermin of his sins. That's what I keep saying. Have we not all our itch? I, myself, have made mistakes. *Plaudite, cives.*"

Ursus uttered a long groan, which he overpowered by these concluding words:

"My lords and gentlemen, I see that my address has unluckily displeased you. I take leave of your hisses for a moment. I shall put on my head, and the performance is going to begin."

He dropt his oratorical tone, and resumed his usual voice.

"Close the curtain. Let me breathe. I have spoken like honey. I have spoken well. My words were like velvet; but they were useless. I called them my lords and gentlemen. What do you think of all this scum, Gwynplaine? How well may we estimate the ills which England has suffered for the last forty years through the illtemper of these irritable and malicious spirits. The ancient Britons were warlike, these are melancholy and learned. They glory in despising the

laws and contemning royal authority. I have done all that human eloquence can do. I have been prodigal of metonymies, as gracious as the blooming cheek of youth. Were they softened by them? I doubt it. What can affect a people who eat so extraordinarily, who stupefy themselves by tobacco so completely that their literary men often write their works with a pipe in their mouths? Never mind. Let us begin the play."

The rings of the curtain were heard being drawn over the rod. The tambourines of the gypsies were still. Ursus took down his instrument, executed his prelude, and said, in a low tone: "Alas! Gwynplaine, how mysterious it is;" then he flung himself down with the wolf.

When he had taken down his instrument, he had also taken from the nail a rough wig which he had, and which he had thrown on the stage in a corner within his reach. The performance of "Chaos Vanquished" took place as usual, minus only the effect of the blue light, and the brilliancy of the fairies. The wolf played his best. At the proper moment Dea made her appearance, and, in her voice so tremulous and heavenly, invoked Gwynplaine. She extended her arms, feeling for that head.

Ursus rushed at the wig, ruffled it, put it on, advanced softly, and holding his breath, his head bristled thus under the hand of Dea.

Then calling all his art to his aid, and copying Gwynplaine's voice, he sang with ineffable love the response of the monster to the call of the spirit. The imitation was so perfect that again the gypsies looked for Gwynplaine, frightened at hearing without seeing him.

Govicum, filled with astonishment, stamped, applauded, clapped his hands, producing an Olympian tumult, and himself laughed as if he had been a chorus of gods. This boy, it must be confessed, developed a rare talent for acting an audience.

Fibi and Vinos, being automats of which Ursus pulled the strings, rattled their instruments, composed of copper and ass's skin, the usual sign of the performance being over and of the departure of the people.

Ursus rose, covered with perspiration. He said, in a low voice, to Homo, "You see it was necessary to gain time. I think we have succeeded. I have not acquitted myself

badly. I, who have as much reason as any one to go distracted. Gwynplaine may perhaps return to-morrow. It is useless to kill Dea directly. I can explain matters to you."

He took off his wig and wiped his forehead.

"I am a ventriloquist of genius," murmured he. "What talent I displayed! I have equalled Brabant, the engastrimist of Frances I., of France. Dea is convinced that Gwynplaine is here."

"Ursus," said Dea, "where is Gwynplaine?"

Ursus started, and turned round. Dea was still standing at the back of the stage, alone under the lamp which hung from the ceiling. She was pale, with the pallor of a ghost.

She added, with an ineffable expression of despair,—

"I know. He has left us. He is gone. I always knew that he had wings."

And raising her sightless eyes on high, she added;

"When shall I follow?"

### CHAPTER III.

#### COMPLICATIONS.

URSUS was stunned.

He had not sustained the illusion.

Was it the fault of ventriloquism? Certainly not. He had succeeded in deceiving Fibi and Vinos, who had eyes, although he had not deceived Dea, who was blind. It was because Fibi and Vinos saw with their eyes, while Dea saw with her heart. He could not utter a word. He thought to himself, *Bos in lingua*. The troubled man has an ox on his tongue.

In his complex emotions, humiliation was the first which dawned on his. Ursus, driven out of his last resource, pondered.

"I lavish my onomatopies in vain." Then, like every dreamer, he reviled himself. "What a frightful failure! I wore myself out in a pure loss of imitative harmony. But what is to be done next?"

He looked at Dea. She was silent, and grew paler every moment, as she stood perfectly motionless. Her sightless eyes remained fixed in depths of thought.

Fortunately, something happened. Ursus

saw Master Nicless in the yard, with a candle in his hand, beckoning to him.

Master Nicless had not assisted at the end of the phantom comedy played by Ursus. Some one had happened to knock at the door of the inn. Master Nicless had gone to open it. There had been two knocks, and twice Master Nicless had disappeared. Ursus, absorbed by his hundred-voiced monologue, had not observed his absence.

On the mute call of Master Nicless, Ursus descended.

He approached the tavern-keeper. Ursus put his finger on his lips. Master Nicless put his finger on his lips.

The two looked at each other thus.

Each seemed to say to the other, "We will talk, but we will hold our tongues."

The tavern-keeper silently opened the door of the lower room of the tavern. Master Nicless entered. Ursus entered. There was no one there except these two. On the side looking on the street, both doors and window-shutters were closed.

The tavern-keeper pushed the door behind him, and shut in the face of the inquisitive Govicum.

Master Nicless placed the candle on the table.

A low, whispering dialogue began.

"Master Ursus?"

"Master Nicless?"

"I understand at last."

"Nonsense!"

"You wished the poor blind girl to think that all was going on as usual."

"There is no law against my being a ventriloquist."

"You are a clever fellow."

"No."

"It is wonderful how you manage all that you wish to do."

"I tell you, it is not."

"Now, I have something to tell you."

"Is it about politics?"

"I don't know."

"Because, in that case I could not listen to you."

"Look here; whilst you were playing actors and audience by yourself, some one knocked at the door of the tavern."

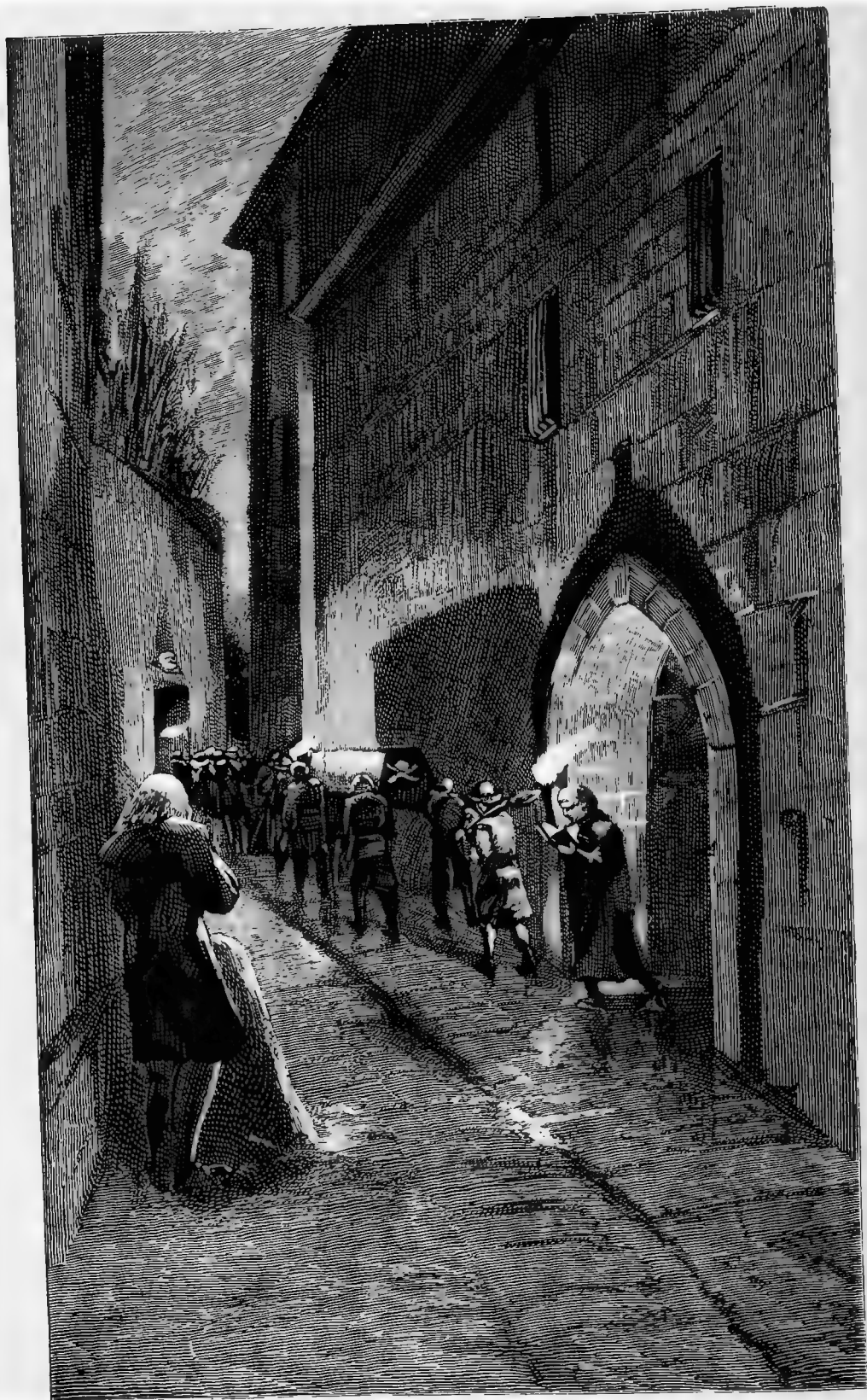
"Some one knocked at the door?"

"Yes."

"I don't like that."

"Nor I, either."





HARDQUANONNE'S BURIAL.

"And then?"

"And then I opened it."

"Who was it that knocked?"

"Some one spoke to me."

"What did he say?"

"I listened to him."

"What did you answer?"

"Nothing. I came back to see you play."

"And—?"

"Some one knocked a second time."

"Who—the same person?"

"No, another."

"Some one else to speak to you?"

"Some one who said nothing."

"I like that better."

"I do not."

"Explain yourself, Master Nicless."

"Guess you called the first time."

"I have no leisure to be an *Œdipus*."

"It was the proprietor of the circus."

"Over the way?"

"Over the way."

"Whence comes all that fearful music. Well?"

"Well, Master Ursus, he makes you a proposal."

"A proposal?"

"A proposal."

"Why?"

"Because——"

"You have an advantage over me, Master Nicless; just now you solved my enigma, and now I cannot understand yours."

"The proprietor of the circus commissioned me to tell you that he had seen the *cortège* of police pass this morning, and that he, the proprietor of the circus, wishing to prove that he is your friend, offers to buy of you, for fifty pounds, ready money, your caravan, the green box, your two horses, your trumpets, with the women that blow them, your play, with the blind girl who sings in it, your wolf, and yourself."

Ursus smiled a haughty smile.

"Innkeeper, tell the proprietor of the circus that Gwynplaine is coming back."

The innkeeper took something from a chair in the darkness, and turning towards Ursus with both arms raised, dangled from one hand a cloak, and from the other a leather esclavine, a felt hat, and a jacket.

And Master Nicless said, "The man who knocked the second time was connected with the police; he came in and left without saying a word, and brought these things."

Ursus recognized the esclavine, the jacket, the hat, and the cloak of Gwynplaine.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MŒNIBUS SURDIS CAMPANA MUTA.

Ursus smoothed the felt of the hat, touched the cloth of the cloak, the serge of the coat, the leather of the esclavine, and no longer able to doubt whose garments they were, with a gesture at once brief and imperative, and without saying a word, pointed to the door of the inn.

Master Nicless opened it.

Ursus rushed out of the tavern.

Master Nicless looked after him, and saw Ursus run as fast as his old legs would allow, in the direction taken that morning by the wapentake who carried off Gwynplaine.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, Ursus, out of breath, reached the little street in which stood the back wicket of the Southwark jail, which he had already watched so many hours. This alley was lonely enough at all hours, but if dreary during the day, it was portentous in the night. No one ventured through it after a certain hour. It seemed as though people feared that the walls should close in, and that if the prison or the cemetery took a fancy to embrace, they should be crushed in their clasp. Such are the effects of darkness. The pollard willows of the Ruelle Vauvert in Paris, was thus ill-famed. It was said that during the night the stumps of those trees changed into great hands, and caught hold of the passers-by.

By instinct the Southwark folks shunned, as we have already mentioned, this alley between a prison and a churchyard. Formerly it had been barricaded during the night by an iron chain. Very uselessly; because the strongest chain which guarded the street was the terror it inspired.

Ursus entered it resolutely.

What intention possessed him? None.

He came into the alley to seek intelligence.

Was he going to knock at the gate of the jail? Certainly not. Such an expedient, at once fearful and vain, had no place in his brain. To attempt to introduce himself to demand an explanation. What folly! Prisons do not open to those who wish to enter, any more than to those who desire to get out. Their hinges never turn except by law. Ur-

sus knew this. Why, then, had he come there? To see. To see what? Nothing. Who can tell? Even to be opposite the gate through which Gwynplaine had disappeared, was something.

Sometimes the blackest and most rugged of walls whispers, and some light escapes through a cranny. A vague glimmering is now and then to be perceived through solid and sombre piles of building. Even to examine the envelope of a fact may go to some purpose. The instant of us all is to leave between the fact which interests us and ourselves but the thinnest possible cover. Therefore it was that Ursus returned to the alley in which the lower entrance to the prison was situated.

Just as he entered he heard one stroke of the clock, then a second.

"Hold," thought he; "can it be midnight already?"

Mechanically he set himself to count.

"Three, four, five."

He mused.

"At what long intervals this clock strikes!—how slowly! Six; seven!"

Then he remarked,—

"What a melancholy sound! Eight, nine!

Ah! nothing can be more natural; it's dull work for a clock to live in a prison. Ten! Besides, there is the cemetery. This clock sounds the hour to the living, and eternity to the dead. Eleven! Alas! to strike the hour to him who is not free, is also to chronicle an eternity! Twelve!"

He paused.

"Yes, it is midnight."

The clock struck a thirteenth stroke.

Ursus shuddered.

"Thirteen!"

Then followed a fourteenth; then a fifteenth.

"What can this mean?"

The strokes continued at long intervals. Ursus listened.

"It is not the striking of a clock: it is the bell Muta. No wonder I said, How long it takes to strike midnight. This clock does not strike, it tolls. What fearful thing is about to take place?"

Formerly all prisons, and all monasteries, had a bell called Muta, reserved for melancholy occasions. La Muta (the mute) was a bell which struck very low, as if doing its best not to be heard.

Ursus had reached the corner which he had

found so convenient for his watch and whence he had been able during a great part of the day, to keep his eye on the prison.

The strokes followed each other at lugubrious intervals.

A knell makes an ugly punctuation in space. It breaks the preoccupation of the mind into funereal paragraphs. A knell like a man's death-rattle, notifies an agony. If in the houses about the neighborhood where a knell is tolled there are reveries straying in doubt, its sound cuts them into rigid fragments. A vague reverie is a sort of refuge.

Some indefinable diffuseness in anguish allows now and then a ray of hope to pierce through it. A knell is precise and desolating. It concentrates this diffusion of thought, and precipitates the vapors in which anxiety seeks to remain in suspense. A knell speaks to each one in the sense of his own grief or of his own fear. Tragic bell! it concerns you. It is a warning to you.

There is nothing so dreary as a monologue on which its cadence falls. The even returns of sound seems to show a purpose. What is it that this hammer, the bell, forges on the anvil of thought!

Ursus counted, vaguely and without motive, the tolling of the knell. Feeling that his thoughts were sliding from him, he made an effort not to let them slip into conjecture. Conjecture is an inclined plane, on which we slip too far to be of our own advantage. Still, what was the meaning of the bell.

He looked through the darkness in the direction in which he knew the gate of the prison to be.

Suddenly, in that very spot which looked like a dark hole, a redness showed. The redness grew larger, and became a light.

There was no uncertainty about it. It soon took a form and angles. The gate of the jail had just turned on its hinges. The glow painted the arch and the jambs of the door. It was a yawning rather than an opening. A prison does not open; it yawns—perhaps from ennui. Through the gate passed a man with a torch in his hand.

The bell rang on. Ursus felt his attention fascinated by two objects. He watched,—his ear the knell, his eye the torch. Behind the first man the gate, which had been ajar, enlarged the opening suddenly, and allowed egress to two other men; then to a fourth. This fourth was the wapentake, clearly visible

in the light of the torch. In his grasp was his iron staff.

Following the wapentake, there filed and opened out below the gateway in order, two by two, with the rigidity of a series of walking posts, ranks of silent men.

This nocturnal procession stepped through the wicket in file, like a procession of penitents, without any solution of continuity, with a funereal care to make no noise, gravely—almost gently; a serpent issues from its hole with similar precautions.

The torch threw out their profiles and attitudes into relief. Fierce looks, sullen attitudes.

Ursus recognised the faces of the police who had that morning carried off Gwynplaine.

There was no doubt about it. They were the same. They were re-appearing.

Of course, Gwynplaine would also re-appear. They had led him to that place. They would bring him back.

It was all quite clear.

Ursus strained his eyes to the utmost. Would they set Gwynplaine at liberty?

The files of the police flowed from the low arch very slowly, and as it were, drop by drop. The toll of the bell was uninterrupted, and seemed to mark their steps. On leaving the prison, the procession turned their backs on Ursus, went to the right, into the bend of the street opposite to that in which he was posted.

A second torch shone under the gateway, announcing the end of the procession.

Ursus was now about to see what they were bringing with them. The prisoner. The man.

Ursus was soon, he thought, to see Gwynplaine.

That which they carried appeared.

It was a bier.

Four men carried a bier, covered with black cloth.

Behind them came a man, with a shovel on his shoulder.

A third lighted torch, held by a man reading a book, probably the chaplain, closed the procession.

The bier followed the ranks of the police, who had turned to the right.

Just at that moment the head of the procession stopped.

Ursus heard the grating of a key.

Opposite the prison, in the low wall which ran along the other side of the street, another

opening was illuminated by a torch passing beneath it.

This gate, over which a death's head was placed, was that of the cemetery.

The wapentake passed through it, then the men, then the second torch. The procession decreased therein, like a reptile entering his retreat.

The files of police penetrated into that other darkness which was beyond the gate; then the bier; then the man with the spade; then the chaplain with his torch and his book, and the gate closed.

There was nothing left but a haze of light above the wall.

A muttering was heard. Then some dull sounds. Doubtless the chaplain and the gravedigger. The one throwing on the coffin some verses of Scripture, the other some clods of earth.

The muttering ceased; the heavy sounds ceased. A movement was made. The torches shone. The wapentake re-appeared, holding high his weapon, under the re-opened gate of the cemetery; then the chaplain with his book, and the gravedigger with his spade. The *cortège* re-appeared without the coffin.

The files of men crossed over in the same order, with the same taciturnity, and in the opposite direction. The gate of the cemetery closed. That of the prison opened. Its sepulchral architecture stood out against the light. The obscurity of the passage became vaguely visible. The solid and deep night of the jail was revealed to sight; then the whole vision disappeared in the depths of shadow.

The knell ceased. All was locked in silence. A sinister incarceration of shadows.

A vanished vision; nothing more.

A passage of spectres, which had disappeared.

The logical arrangement of surmises builds up something which at least resembles evidence. To the arrest of Gwynplaine, to the secret mode of his capture, to the return of his garments by the police officer, to the death-bell of the prison to which he had been conducted, was now added, or rather adjoined,—portentous circumstance—a coffin carried to the grave.

"He is dead!" cried Ursus.

He sank down upon a stone.

"Dead! They have killed him! Gwynplaine! My child! My son!"

And he burst into passionate sobs.



## CHAPTER V.

STATE POLICY DEALS WITH LITTLE MATTERS  
AS WELL AS WITH GREAT.

URSUS, alas! had boasted that he had never wept. His reservoir of tears was full. Such plenitude as is accumulated drop on drop, sorrow on sorrow, through a long existence, is not to be poured out in a moment. Ursus wept long.

The first tear is a letting out of waters. He wept for Gwynplaine, for Dea, for himself, Ursus, for Homo. He wept like a child. He wept like an old man. He wept for everything at which he had ever laughed. He paid off arrears. Man is never nonsuited when he pleads his right to tears.

The corpse they had just buried was Hard-quanonne's; but Ursus could not know that.

The hours crept on.

Day began to break. The pale clothing of the morning was spread out, dimly creased with shadow, over the bowling-green. The dawn lighted up the front of the Tadcaster Inn. Master Nicless had not gone to bed, because sometimes the same occurrence produces sleeplessness in many.

Troubles radiate in every direction. Throw a stone in the water, and count the splashes.

Master Nicless felt himself impeached. It is very disagreeable that such things should happen in one's house. Master Nicless, uneasy, and foreseeing misfortunes, meditated. He regretted having received such people into his house. Had he but known that they would end by getting him into mischief! But the question was how to get rid of them? He had given Ursus a lease. What a blessing if he could free himself from it. How should he set to work to drive them out?

Suddenly the door of the inn resounded with one of those tumultuous knocks which in England announces "Somebody." The gamut of knocking corresponds with the ladder of hierarchy.

It was not quite the knock of a lord; but it was the knock of a justice.

The trembling innkeeper half opened his window. There was, indeed, the magistrate. Master Nicless perceived at the door a body of police, from the head of which two men detached themselves, one of whom was the justice of the quorum.

Master Nicless had seen the justice of the

quorum that morning, and recognized him.

He did not know the other, who was a fat gentleman, with a waxen-colored face, a fashionable wig, and a travelling cloak. Nicless was much afraid of the first of these persons, the justice of the quorum. Had he been of the court, he would have feared the other most, because it was Barkilphedro.

One of the subordinates knocked at the door again, violently.

The innkeeper, with great drops of perspiration on his brow, from anxiety, opened it.

The justice of the quorum, in the tone of a man who is employed in matters of police, and who is well acquainted with various shades of vagrancy, raised his voice, and asked, severely, for—

"Master Ursus!"

The host, cap in hand, replied,—

"Your honor; he lives here."

"I know it," said the justice.

"No doubt, your honor."

"Tell him to come down."

"Your honor, he is not here."

"Where is he?"

"I do not know."

"How is that?"

"He has not come in."

"Then he must have gone out very early?"

"No; but he went out very late."

"What vagabonds!" replied the justice.

"Your honor," said Master Nicless, softly, "here he comes."

Ursus, indeed, had just come in sight, round a turn of the wall. He was returning to the inn. He had passed nearly the whole night between the jail, where at midday he had seen Gwynplaine, and the cemetery, where at midnight he had heard the grave filled up. He was pallid with two pallors—that of sorrow and of twilight.

Dawn, which is light in a chrysalis state, leaves even those forms which are in movement, in the uncertainty of night. Ursus, wan and indistinct, walked slowly, like a man in a dream. In the wild distraction produced by agony of mind, he had left the inn with his head bare. He had not even found out that he had no hat on. His spare, grey looks fluttered in the wind. His open eyes appeared sightless. Often when awake we are asleep and as often when asleep we are awake.

Ursus looked like a lunatic.

"Master Ursus," cried the innkeeper,

"come ; their honors desire to speak to you."

Master Nicless, in his endeavour to soften matters down, let slip, although he would gladly have omitted, this plural their honors—respectful to the group, but mortifying, perhaps, to the chief, confounded therein, to some degree, with his subordinates.

Ursus started like a man falling off a bed, on which he was sound asleep.

"What is the matter?" said he.

He saw the police, and at the head of the police the justice. A fresh and rude shock.

But a short time ago, the wapentake, now the justice of the quorum. He seemed to have been cast from one to the other, as ships by some reefs of which we have read in old stories.

The justice of the quorum made him a sign to enter the tavern. Ursus obeyed.

Govicum, who had just got up, and who was sweeping the room, stopped his work, got into a corner behind the tables, put down his broom, and held his breath. He plunged his fingers into his hair, and scratched his head, a symptom which indicated attention to what was about to occur.

The justice of the quorum sat down on a form, before a table. Barkilphedro took a chair. Ursus and Master Nicless remained standing. The police officers, left outside, grouped themselves in front of the closed door.

The justice of the quorum fixed his eye, full of the law, upon Ursus. He said,—

"You have a wolf."

Ursus answered,—

"Not exactly."

"You have a wolf," continued the justice, emphasizing "wolf" with a decided accent.

Ursus answered,—

"You see——"

And he was silent.

"A misdemeanor!" replied the justice.

Ursus hazarded an excuse,—

"He is my servant."

The justice placed his hand flat on the table, with his fingers spread out, which is a very fine gesture of authority.

"Merryandrew! to-morrow, by this hour, you and your wolf must have left England. If not, the wolf will be seized, carried to the register office and killed."

Ursus thought, "More murder!" but he breathed not a syllable, and was satisfied with trembling in every limb.

"You hear?" said the justice.

Ursus nodded.

The justice persisted,—

"Killed."

There was silence.

"Strangled, or drowned."

The justice of the quorum watched Ursus.

"And yourself in prison."

Ursus murmured,—

"Your worship!"

"Be off before to-morrow morning; if not, such is the order."

"Your worship!"

"What?"

"Must we leave England, he and I?"

"Yes."

"To-day?"

"To-day."

"What is to be done?"

Master Nicless was happy. The magistrate, whom he had feared, had come to his aid. The police had acted as an auxiliary to him, Nicless. They had delivered him from "such people." The means he had sought were brought to him. Ursus, whom he wanted to get rid of, was being driven away by the police, a superior authority. Nothing to object to. He was delighted. He interrupted,—

"Your honor, that man——"

He pointed to Ursus with his finger.

"That man wants to know how he is to leave England to-day. Nothing can be easier. There are night and day at anchor on the Thames, both on this and on the other side of London Bridge, vessels that sail to the continent. They go from England to Denmark, to Holland, to Spain; not to France, on account of the war, but everywhere else. To-night several ships will sail, about one o'clock in the morning, which is the hour of high tide, and, amongst others, the *Vograat*, of Rotterdam."

The justice of the quorum made a movement of his shoulder towards Ursus.

"Be it so. Leave by the first ship—by the *Vograat*."

"Your worship," said Ursus.

"Well?"

"Your worship, if I had, as formerly, only my little box on wheels, it might be done. A boat would contain that, but——"

"But what?"

"But now I have got the Green Box, which is a great caravan drawn by two

horses, and however wide the ship might be, we could not get it into her."

"What is that to me?" said the justice. "The wolf will be killed."

Ursus shuddered, as if he were grasped by a hand of ice.

"Monsters!" he thought. "Murdering people is their way of settling matters."

The innkeeper smiled, and addressed Ursus.

"Master Ursus, you can sell the Green Box."

Ursus looked at Nicless.

"Master Ursus, you have the offer."

"From whom?"

"An offer for the caravan, an offer for the two horses, an offer for the two gypsy-women, an offer——"

"From whom?" repeated Ursus.

"From the proprietor of the neighboring circus."

Ursus remembered it.

"It is true."

Master Nicless turned to the justice of the quorum.

"Your honor, the bargain can be completed to-day. The proprietor of the circus close by, wishes to buy the caravan and the horses."

"The proprietor of the circus is right," said the justice; "because he will soon require them. A caravan and horses will be useful to him. He, too, will depart to-day. The reverend gentlemen of the parish of Southwark have complained of the indecent riot in Tarrinzeau field. The sheriff has taken his measures. To-night there will not be a single juggler's booth in the place. There must be an end of all these scandals. The honorable gentleman who deigns to be here present——"

The justice of the quorum interrupted his speech to salute Barkilphedro, who returned the bow.

"The honorable gentleman who deigns to be present, has just arrived from Windsor. He brings orders. Her Majesty has said, 'It must be swept away.'"

Ursus, during his long meditation all night, had not failed to put himself some questions. After all, he had only seen a bier. Could he be sure that it contained Gwynplaine? Other people might have died besides Gwynplaine. A coffin does not announce the name of the corpse, as it passes

by. A funeral had followed the arrest of Gwynplaine. That proved nothing. *Post hoc, non propter hoc, etc.* Ursus had begun to doubt.

Hope burns and glimmers over misery like naphtha over water. Its hovering flame ever floats over human sorrow. Ursus had come to this conclusion, "It is probable that it was Gwynplaine whom they buried, but it is not certain. Who knows!—perhaps Gwynplaine is still alive."

Ursus bowed to the justice.

"Honorable judge, I will go away, we will go away, all will go away by the *Vograat*, of Rotterdam, to-day. I will sell the Green Box, the horses, the trumpets, the gipsies. But I have a comrade, whom I cannot leave behind—Gwynplaine."

"Gwynplaine is dead," said a voice.

Ursus felt a cold sensation, such as is produced by a reptile crawling over the skin. It was Barkilphedro who had just spoken.

The last gleam was extinguished. No more doubt now. Gwynplaine was dead. A person in authority must know. This one looked ill-favored enough to do so.

Ursus bowed to him.

Master Nicless was a good-hearted man enough, but a dreadful coward. Once terrified he became a brute. The greatest cruelty is that inspired by fear.

He growled out,—

"This simplifies matters."

And he indulged, standing behind Ursus, in rubbing his hands, a peculiarity of the selfish, signifying "I am well out of it," and suggestive of Pontius Pilate washing his hands.

Ursus, overwhelmed, bent down his head.

The sentence on Gwynplaine had been executed: Death. His sentence was pronounced: Exile. Nothing remained but to obey. He felt as in a dream.

Some one touched his arm. It was the other person, who was with the justice of the quorum. Ursus shuddered.

The voice which had said, "Gwynplaine is dead," whispered in his ear—

"Here are ten guineas, sent you by one who wishes you well."

And Barkilphedro placed a little purse on a table before Ursus. We must not forget the casket that Barkilphedro had taken with him.

Ten guineas out of two thousand! It was

all that Barkilphedro could make up his mind to part with. In all conscience it was enough. If he had given more, he would have lost. He had taken the trouble of finding out a lord; and having sunk the shaft it was but fair that the first proceeds of the mine should belong to him. Those who see meanness in the act are right, but they would be wrong to feel astonished. Barkilphedro loved money, especially money which was stolen. An envious man is an avaricious one. Barkilphedro was not without his faults. The commission of crimes does not preclude the possession of vices. Tigers have their lice.

Besides, he belonged to the school of Bacon.

Barkilphedro turned towards the justice of the quorum, and said to him—

“Sir, be so good as to conclude this matter. I am in haste. A carriage and horses belonging to her Majesty, await me. I must go full gallop to Windsor, for I must be there within two hours’ time. I have intelligence to give, and orders to take.”

The justice of the quorum arose.

He went to the door, which was only latched, opened it, and, looking silently towards the police, beckoned to them authoritatively. They entered with that silence which heralds severity of action.

Master Nicless—satisfied with the rapid *dénouement* which cut short his difficulties—charmed to be out of the entangled skein, was afraid, when he saw the muster of officers, that they were going to apprehend Ursus in his house. Two arrests one after the other—made in his house, first that of Gwynplaine, then that of Ursus, might be injurious to the inn. Customers dislike police raids.

Here then was a time for a respectful appeal, suppliant and generous. Master Nicless turned toward the justice of the quorum a smiling face, in which confidence was tempered by respect.

“Your honor, I venture to observe to your honor, that these honorable gentlemen, the police officers, might be dispensed with, now that the wolf is about to be carried away from England, and that this man, Ursus, makes no resistance; and since your honor’s orders are being punctually carried out, your honor will consider that the respectable business of the police, so necessary to the good of the kingdom, does great harm to an estab-

lishment, and that my house is innocent. The merry-andrews of the Green Box having been swept away, as her Majesty says, there is no longer any criminal here, as I do not suppose that the blind girl and the two women are criminals; therefore, I implore your honor to deign to shorten your august visit, and to dismiss these worthy gentlemen who have just entered, because there is nothing for them to do in my house; and, if your honor will permit me to prove the justice of my speech under the form of a humble question, I will prove the inutility of these revered gentlemen’s presence by asking your honor, if the man, Ursus, obeys orders, and departs, who there can be to arrest here?”

“Yourself,” said the justice.

A man does not argue with a sword which runs him through and through. Master Nicless subsided—he cared not on what, on a table, or a form, on anything that happened to be there—prostrate.

The justice raised his voice, so that if there were people outside, they might hear.

“Master Nicless Plumtree, keeper of this tavern, that is the last point to be settled. This mountebank and the wolf are vagabonds. They are driven away. But the person most in fault is yourself. It is in your house, and with your consent, that the law has been violated; and you, a man licensed, invested with a public responsibility, have established the scandal here. Master Nicless, your license is taken away; you must pay the penalty, and go to prison.

The policemen surrounded the innkeeper.

The justice continued, pointing out Govicum,—

“Arrest that boy as an accomplice.” The hand of an officer fell upon the collar of Govicum, who looked at him inquisitively. The boy was not much alarmed, scarcely understanding the occurrence; having already observed many things out of the way, he wondered if this were the end of the comedy.

The justice of the quorum forced his hat down on his head, crossed his hands on his stomach, which is the height of majesty, and added,

“It is decided, Master Nicless; you are to be taken to prison, and put into jail, you and the boy; and this house, the Tadcaster Inn, is to remain shut up, condemned and closed. For the sake of example. Upon which, you will follow us.”

## BOOK THE SEVENTH.

## THE TITANESS.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE AWAKENING.

AND DEA!

It seemed to Gwynplaine, as he watched the break of day at Corleone Lodge, while the things we have related were occurring at the Tadcaster Inn, that the call came from without—but it came from within.

Who has not heard the deep clamors of the soul?

Moreover, the morning was dawning.

Aurora is a voice.

Of what use is the sun, if not to re-awaken that dark sleeper—the conscience?

Light and virtue are akin.

Whether the god be called Christ or Love, there is at times an hour when he is forgotten, even by the best. All of us, even the saints, require a voice to remind us, and the dawn speaks to us, like a sublime monitor. Conscience calls out before duty, as the cock crows before the dawn of day.

That chaos, the human heart, hears the *Fiat lux!*

Gwynplaine—we will continue thus to call him; Clancharlie is a lord, Gwynplaine is a man—Gwynplaine felt as if brought back to life. It was time that the artery was bound up.

For awhile his virtue had spread its wings and flown away.

"And Dea!" he said.

Then he felt through his veins a generous transfusion. Something healthy and tumultuous rushed upon him. The violent irruption of good thoughts is like the return home of a man who has not his key, and who forces his own lock honestly. It is an escalade; but an escalade of good. It is a burglary; but not a burglary of evil.

"Dea! Dea! Dea!" repeated he.

He strove to assure himself of his heart's strength. And he put the question with a loud voice—"Where are you?"

He almost wondered that no one answered him.

Then again, gazing on the walls and the ceiling, with wandering thoughts, through which reason returned.

"Where are you? Where am I?"

And in the chamber which was his cage, he began to walk again, to and fro, like a wild beast in captivity.

"Where am I? At Windsor; and you? in Southwark. Alas! this is the first time that there has been distance between us. Who has dug this gulf? I here, thou there. Oh! it cannot be; it shall not be! What is this that they have done to me?"

He stopped

"Who talked to me of the queen? What do I know of such things? I changed! Why? Because I am a lord. Do you know what has happened, Dea? You are a lady. What has come to pass is astounding. My business now is to get back into my right road. Who is it who led me astray? There is a man who spoke to me mysteriously. I remember the words which he addressed to me. 'My lord, when one door opens another is shut. That which you have left behind is no longer yours.' In other words, you are a coward. That man, the miserable wretch! said that to me before I was well awake. He took advantage of my first moment of astonishment. I was as it were a prey to him. Where is he, that I may insult him! He spoke to me with the evil smile of a demon. But see, I am myself again. That is well. They deceive themselves if they think that they can do what they like with Lord Clancharlie, a peer of England. Yes, with a peeress, who is Dea! Conditions! Shall I accept them! The queen. What is the queen to me, I never saw her. I am not a lord to be made a slave. I enter my position unfettered. Did they think they had unchained me for nothing. They have unmuzzled me. That is all. Deal Ursus! we are together. That which you were, I was. That which I am, you are. Come. No. I will go to you directly—directly. I have already waited too long. What can they think, not seeing me return! That money. When I think I sent them that money! It was myself that they wanted. I remember the man said that I could not leave this place. We shall see that. Come! a carriage, a carriage! put to the horses. I am going to look for them. Where are the servants? I ought to have servants here since I am lord. I am master here. This is my house. I will twist off the bolts, I will break the locks, I will kick down the doors, I will run my sword through the body of any one

who bars my passage. I should like to see who shall stop me. I have a wife, and she is Dea. I have a father, who is Ursus. My house is a palace, and I give it to Ursus. My name is a diadem, and I give it to Dea. Quick, directly, Dea, I am coming—yes, you may be sure that I shall soon stride across the intervening space!”

And raising the first piece of tapestry he came to, he rushed from the chamber impetuously.

He found himself in a corridor.

He went straight forward.

A second corridor opened out before him.

All the doors were open.

He walked on at random, from chamber to chamber, from passage to passage, seeking an exit.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE RESEMBLANCE OF A PALACE TO A WOOD.

In palaces after the Italian fashion, and Corleone Lodge was one, there were very few doors, but abundance of tapestry screens and curtained doorways. In every palace of that date there was a wonderful labyrinth of chambers and corridors, where luxury ran riot; gilding, marble, carved wainscoating, Eastern silks; nooks and corners, some secret and dark as night, others light and pleasant as the day. There were attics, richly and brightly furnished; burnished recesses, shining with Dutch tiles and Portuguese azulejos. The tops of the high windows were converted into small rooms and glass attics, forming pretty habitable lanterns. The thickness of the walls was such that there were rooms within them. Here and there were closets, nominally wardrobes. They were called “The Little Rooms.” It was within them that evil deeds were hatched.

When a Duke of Guise had to be killed, the pretty Présidente of Sylvecane abducted, or the cries of little girls brought thither by Lebel, smothered, such places were convenient for the purpose. They were labyrinthine chambers, impracticable to a stranger; scenes of abductions; unknown depths, receptacles of mysterious disappearances. In those elegant caverns princes and lords stored their plunder. In such a place the Count de Charolais hid Madame Courchamp, the wife of the Clerk of the Privy Council; Monsieur

de Monthulé, the daughter of Haudry, the farmer of la Croix Saint Lenfroy; the Prince de Conti, the two beautiful baker women of l’Île Adam; the Duke of Buckingham, poor Pennywell, etc. The deeds done there were designated by the Roman law as committed *vi, clam, et precario*—by force, in secret, and for a short time. Once in, an occupant remained there till the master of the house decreed his or her release. They were gilded oubliettes, savoring both of the cloister and the harem. Their staircases twisted, turned, ascended, and descended. A zig-zag of rooms, one running into another, led back to the starting point. A gallery terminating in an oratory. A confessional was grafted on to an alcove. Perhaps the architects of “the little rooms,” building for royalty and aristocracy, took as models the ramifications of coral beds, and the openings in a sponge. The branches became a labyrinth. Pictures turning on false panels were exits and entrances. They were full of stage contrivances, and no wonder—considering the dramas that were played there! The floors of these hives reached from the cellars to the attics. Quaint madre-pore inlaying every palace, from Versailles downwards, like cells of pigmies in dwelling-places of Titans. Passages, niches, alcoves, and secret recesses. All sorts of holes and corners, in which was stored away the meanness of the great.

These winding and narrow passages recalled games, blindfolded eyes, hands feeling in the dark, suppressed laughter, blind man’s buff, hide and seek, while, at the same time, they suggested memories of the Atrides, of the Plantagenets, of the Medicis, the brutal knights of Eltz, of Rizzio, of Monaldeschi; of naked swords, pursuing the fugitive flying from room to room.

The ancients, too, had mysterious retreats of the same kind, in which luxury was adapted to enormities. The pattern has been preserved underground in some sepulchres in Egypt, notably in the tomb of King Psammetichus, discovered by Passalacqua. The ancient poets have recorded the horrors of these suspicious buildings. *Error circumflexus. Locus implicitus gyris.*

Gwynplaine was in the “little room” of Corleone Lodge. He was burning to be off, to get outside, to see Dea again. The maze of passages and alcoves, with secret and bewildering doors, checked and retarded his

progress. He strove to run, he was obliged to wander. He thought that he had but one door to thrust open, while he had a skein of doors to unravel. To one room succeeded another. Then a crossway, with rooms on every side.

Not a living creature was to be seen. He listened. Not a sound.

At times he thought that he must be returning towards his starting-point. Then, that he saw some one approaching. It was no one. It was only the reflection of himself in a mirror, dressed as a nobleman. *That* he—impossible! Then he recognized himself, but not at once.

He explored every passage that he came to.

He examined the quaint arrangements of the rambling building, and their yet quaint fittings. Here, a cabinet, painted and carved in a sentimental, but vicious style; there, an equivocal-looking chapel, studded with enamels and mother of pearl, with miniatures on ivory wrought out in relief, like those on old-fashioned snuff-boxes; there, one of those pretty Florentine retreats, adapted to the hypochondriasis of women, and even then called *boudoirs*. Everywhere—on the ceilings, on the walls, and on the very floors—were representations, in velvet or in metal, of birds, of trees; of luxuriant vegetation, picked out in reliefs of lace-work; tables covered with jet carvings, representing warriors, queens, and tritons, armed with the scaly terminations of a hydra. Cut crystals combining prismatic effects with those of reflection. Mirrors repeated the light of precious stones, and sparkles glittered in the dark corners. It was impossible to guess whether those many-sided, shining surfaces, were emerald green mingled with the golden hues of the rising sun, where floated a glimmer of ever-varying colors, like those on a pigeon's neck, were miniature mirrors, or enormous beryls. Everywhere was magnificence, at once refined and stupendous; if it was not the most diminutive of palaces, it was the most gigantic of jewel-cases. A house for Mab or a jewel for Geo.

Gwynplaine sought an exit! He could not find one. Impossible to make out his way. There is nothing so confusing as wealth seen for the first time. Moreover, this was a labyrinth. At each step he was stopped by some magnificent object which appeared to retard his exit, and to be unwilling to let him pass. He was encompassed by a net of wonders. He felt himself bound and held back.

What a horrible palace! he thought. Restless, he wandered through the maze, asking himself what it all meant—whether he was in prison? chafing, thirsting for the fresh air. He repeated *Dea! Dea!* as if that word was the thread of the labyrinth, and must be held unbroken, to guide him out of it. Now and then he shouted, “*Ho! Any one there?*” No one answered. The rooms never came to an end. All was deserted, silent, splendid, sinister. It realized the fables of enchanted castles. Hidden pipes of hot air maintained a summer temperature in the building. It was as if some magician had caught up the month of June, and imprisoned it in a labyrinth. There were pleasant odors now and then, and he crossed currents of perfume, as though passing by invisible flowers. It was warm. Carpets everywhere. One might have walked about there, unclothed.

Gwynplaine looked out of the windows. The view from each one was different. From one he beheld gardens, sparkling with the freshness of spring morning; from another, a plot decked with statues; from a third, a patio in the Spanish style, a little square, flagged, muddy, and cold. At times he saw a river—it was the Thames; sometimes a great tower—it was Windsor.

It was still so early that there were no signs of life without.

He stood still and listened.

“*Oh! I will get out of this place,*” said he. “*I will return to Dea! They shall not keep me here by force. Woe to him who bars my exit. What is that great tower yonder? If there was a giant, a hell-hound, a minotaur, to keep the gates of this enchanted palace, I would annihilate him. If an army, I would exterminate it! Dea! Dea!*”

Suddenly he heard a gentle noise, very faint. It was like dropping water. He was in a dark, narrow passage, closed, some few paces further on, by a curtain. He advanced to the curtain, pushed it aside, entered. He leaped before he looked.

### CHAPTER III.

EVE.

AN octagon room, with a vaulted ceiling, without windows, but lighted by a skylight; walls, ceiling, and floors faced with peach-colored marble; a black marble canopy, like

a pall, with twisted columns in the solid but pleasing Elizabethan style, over-shadowing a vase-like bath of the same black marble—this was what he saw before him. In the centre of the bath arose a slender jet of tepid and perfumed water, which, softly and slowly, was filling the tank. The bath was black to augment fairness into brilliancy.

It was the water which he had heard. A waste-pipe, placed at a certain height in the bath, prevented it from overflowing. Vapor was rising from the water; but not sufficient to cause it to hang in drops on the marble. The slender jet of water was like a supple wand of steel, bending at the slightest current of air. There was no furniture, except a chair-bed with pillows, long enough for a woman to lie on at full length, and yet have room for a dog at her feet. The French, indeed, borrow their word *canapé* from *can-alpie*. This sofa was of Spanish manufacture. In it silver took the place of wood-work. The cushions and coverings were of rich white silk.

On the other side of the bath, by the wall, was a lofty dressing-table of solid silver, furnished with every requisite for the table, having in its centre, and in imitation of a window, eight small Venetian mirrors, set in a silver frame. In a panel on the wall was a square opening, like a little window, which was closed by a door of solid silver. This door was fitted with hinges, like a shutter. On the shutter there glistened a chased and gilt royal crown. Over it, and affixed to the wall, was a bell, silver gilt, if not of pure gold.

Opposite the entrance of the chamber, in which Gwynplaine stood as if transfixed, there was an opening in the marble wall, extending to the ceiling, and closed by a high and broad curtain of silver tissue. This curtain, of fairy-like tenuity, was transparent, and did not interrupt the view. Through the centre of this web, where one might expect a spider, Gwynplaine saw a more formidable object—a naked woman. Yet not quite naked; for she was covered—covered from head to foot. Her dress was a long chemise; so long, that it floated over her feet, like the dresses of angels in holy pictures; but so fine that it seemed liquid. More treacherous and more perilous was this covering than naked beauty could have been. History has registered the procession of princesses and of

great ladies between files of monks; under pretext of naked feet and of humility, the Duchess de Montpensier showed herself to all Paris in a lace shift, a wax taper in her hand as a corrective.

The silver tissue, transparent as glass and fastened only at the ceiling, could be lifted aside. It separated the marble chamber, which was a bath-room, from the adjoining apartment, which was a bed-chamber. This tiny dormitory was as a grotto of mirrors. Venetian glasses, close together, mounted with gold mouldings, reflected on every side the bed in the centre of the room. On the bed, which, like the toilette-table, was of silver, lay the woman; she was asleep.

She was sleeping with her head thrown back, one foot peeping from its covering, like the Succuba, above whose heads dreams flap their wings.

Her lace pillow had fallen on the floor. Between her nakedness and the eye of the spectator were two obstacles—her chemise and the curtain of silver gauze; two transparencies. The room, rather an alcove than a chamber, was lighted with some reserve by the reflection from the bath-room. Perhaps the light was more modest than the woman.

The bed had neither columns, nor dais, nor top; so that the woman, when she opened her eyes, could see herself reflected a thousand times in the mirrors above her head.

The crumpled clothes bore evidence of troubled sleep. The beauty of the folds was proof of the quality of the material.

It was a period when a queen, thinking that she should be damned, pictured hell to herself as a bed with coarse sheets.\*

A dressing-gown, of curious silk, was thrown over the foot of the couch. It was apparently Chinese; for a great golden lizard was partly visible in between the folds.

Beyond the couch, and probably masking a door, was a large mirror, on which were painted peacocks and swans.

Shadow seemed to lose its nature in this apartment, and glistened. The spaces between the mirrors and the gold work were lined with that sparkling material called at Venice thread of glass,—i.e. spun glass.

At the head of the couch stood a reading desk, on a movable pivot, with candles, and

\* This fashion of sleeping partly undressed came from Italy, and was derived from the Romans. "*Sub clarâ nuda lacernâ*," says Horace.



a book lying open, bearing this title, in large red letters, "Alcoranus Mahumedis."

Gwynplaine saw none of these details. He had eyes only for the woman. He was at once stupefied and filled with tumultuous emotions, states apparently incompatible, yet sometimes coexistent. He recognized her. Her eyes were closed, but her face was turned towards him. It was the duchess. She, the mysterious being in whom all the splendors of the unknown were united; she who had occasioned him so many unavowable dreams; she who had written him so strange a letter! The only woman in the world of whom he could say, "She has seen me, and she desires me!"

He had dismissed the dreams from his mind; he had burnt the letter. He had, as far as lay in his power, banished the remembrance of her from his thoughts and dreams.

He no longer thought of her. He had forgotten her. . . .

Again he saw her, and saw her terrible in power. A woman naked, is a woman armed. His breath came in short catches. He felt as if he were in a storm-driven cloud. He looked. This woman before him! Was it possible? At the theatre, a duchess; here, a nereid, a nymph, a fairy. Always an apparition. He tried to fly, but felt the futility of the attempt. His eyes were riveted on the vision, as though he were bound. Was she a woman? Was she a maiden? Both. Messalina was perhaps, present, though invisible, and smiled, while Diana kept watch.

Over all her beauty was the radiance of inaccessibility. No purity could compare with her chaste and haughty form. Certain snows which have never been touched, give an idea of it—such as the sacred whiteness of the Jungfrau. That which was represented by that unconscious brow; by that rich dishevelled hair; by the drooping lids; by those blue veins, dimly visible; by the sculptured roundness of her bosom, her hips, and her knees, cated by delicate pink undulations seen through the fold of her drapery was the divinity of her queenly sleep. Immodesty was merged in splendor. She was as calm in her nakedness, as if she had the right to a godlike effrontery. She felt the security of an Olympian, who knew that she was the daughter of the depths, and might say to the ocean, "Father!" And she exposed herself, unattainable and proud, to

everything that should pass—to looks, to desires, to ravings, to dreams; as proud in her languor, on her boudoir couch, as Venus in the immensity of the sea-foam.

She had slept all night, and was prolonging her sleep into the daylight; her boldness, begun in shadow, continued in light.

Gwynplaine shuddered. He admired her with an unhealthy and absorbing admiration, which ended in fear. Misfortunes never come singly. Gwynplaine thought he had drained to the dregs the cup of his ill luck. Now it was refilled. Who was it who was hurling all those unremitting thunderbolts on his devoted head and who had now thrown against him, as he stood trembling there, a sleeping goddess? What! was the dangerous and desirable object of his dream lurking all the while behind these successive glimpses of heaven? Did these favors of the mysterious tempter tend to inspire him with vague aspirations and confused ideas, and overwhelm him with an intoxicating series of realities proceeding from apparent impossibilities? Wherefore did all the shadow conspire against him, a wretched man; and what would become of him, with all those evil smiles of fortune beaming on him? Was his temptation prearranged? This woman, how and why was she there? No explanation! Why him? Why her? Was he made a peer of England expressly for this duchess? Who had brought them together? Who was the dupe? Who the victim? Whose simplicity was being abused? Was it God who was being deceived? All these undefined thoughts passed confusedly, like a flight of dark shadows, through his brain. That magical and malevolent abode, that strange and prison-like palace, was it also in the plot? Gwynplaine suffered a partial unconsciousness. Suppressed emotions threatened to strangle him. He was weighed down by an overwhelming force. His will became powerless. How could he resist? He was incoherent and entranced. This time he felt he was becoming irremediably insane. His dark, headlong fall over the precipice of stupefaction continued.

But the woman slept on.

What aggravated the storm within him was, that he saw not the princess, not the duchess, not the lady; but the woman.

Deviations from right exist in man, in a latent state. There is an invisible tracing of vice, ready prepared, in our organizations.

Even when we are innocent, and apparently pure, it exists within us. To be stainless, is not to be faultless. Love is a law. Desire is a snare. There is a great difference between getting drunk once and habitual drunkenness. To desire a woman, is the former; to desire women, the latter.

Gwynplaine, losing all self-command, trembled. What could he do against such a temptation? Here were no skilful effects of dress, no silken folds, no complex and coquetish adornments, no affected exaggeration of concealment or of exhibition, no cloud. It was nakedness in fearful simplicity—a sort of mysterious summons—the shameless audacity of Eden. The whole of the dark side of human nature was there. Eve worse than Satan; the human and the superhuman commingled. A perplexing ecstasy, winding up in a brutal triumph of instinct over duty. The sovereign contour of beauty is imperious. When it leaves the ideal and condescends to be real, its proximity is fatal to man.

Now and then the duchess moved softly on the bed, with the vague movement of a cloud in the heavens, changing as a vapor changes its forms. She undulated, composing and discomposing the charming curves of her body. Woman is as supple as water; and, like water, this one had an indescribable appearance of its being impossible to grasp her. Absurd as it may appear, though he saw her present in the flesh before him, yet she seemed a chimera; and, palpable as she was, she seemed to him afar off. Scared and livid, he gazed on. He listened for her breathing and fancied he heard only a phantom's respiration. He was attracted, though against his will. How arm himself against her—or against himself? He had been prepared for everything except this danger. A savage door-keeper, a raging monster of a jailer—such were his expected antagonists. He looked for Cerberus, he saw Hebe. A sleeping woman! What an opponent! He closed his eyes. Too bright a dawn blinds the eyes. But through his closed eyelids there penetrated at once the woman's form not so distinct, but beautiful as ever.

Fly! Easier said than done. He had already tried and failed. He was rooted to the ground, as if in a dream. When we try to draw back, temptation clogs our feet, and glues them to the earth. We can still advance; but to retire is impossible. The in-

visible arms of sin rise from below and drag us down.

There is a commonplace idea, accepted by every one, that feelings become blunted by experience. Nothing can be more untrue. You might as well say that by dropping nitric acid slowly on a sore it would heal and become sound, and that torture dulled the sufferings of Damiens. The truth is, that each fresh application intensifies the pain.

From one surprise after another, Gwynplaine had become desperate. That cup, his reason, under this new stupor, was overflowing. He felt within him a terrible awakening. Compass he no longer possessed. One idea only was before him—the woman. An indescribable happiness appeared, which threatened to overwhelm him. He could no longer decide for himself. There was an irresistible current and a reef. The reef was not a rock, but a siren. A magnet at the bottom of the abyss. He wished to tear himself away from this magnet—but how was he to carry out his wish? He had ceased to feel any basis of support. Who can foresee the fluctuations of the human mind! A man may be wrecked, as is a ship. Conscience is an anchor. It is a terrible thing, but, like the anchor, conscience may be carried away.

He had not even the chance of being repulsed on account of his terrible disfigurement. The woman had written to say that she loved him.

In every crisis there is a moment when the scale hesitates before kicking the beam. When we lean to the worst side of our nature, instead of strengthening our better qualities, the moral force which has been preserving the balance gives way, and down we go. Had this critical moment in Gwynplaine's life arrived?

How could he escape?

So it is she! the duchess! the woman! There she was in that lonely room,—asleep, far from succor, helpless, alone, at his mercy—yet he was in her power! The duchess! We have, perchance, observed a star in the distant firmament. We have admired it. It is so far off. What can there be to make us shudder in a fixed star? Well, one day—one night, rather—it moves. We perceive a trembling gleam around it. The star which we imagined to be immovable, is in motion. It is no longer a star, but a comet—the incendiary giant of the skies. The luminary

moves on, grows bigger, shakes off a shower of sparks and fire, and becomes enormous. It advances towards us. Oh, horror! it is coming our way! The comet recognizes us, marks us for its own, and will not be turned aside. Irresistible attack of the heavens! What is it which is bearing down on us? An excess of light, which blinds us; an excess of life, which kills us. That proposal which the heavens make, we refuse; that unfathomable love we reject. We close our eyes; we hide; we tear ourselves away; we imagine the danger is past. We open our eyes—the formidable star is still before us; but, no longer a star, it has become a world. A world unknown, a world of lava and ashes; the devastating prodigy of space. It fills the sky, allowing no compeers. The carbuncle of the firmament's depths, a diamond in the distance, when drawn close to us becomes a furnace. You are caught in its flames. And the first sensation of burning is that of a heavenly warmth.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### SATAN.

SUDDENLY the sleeper awoke. She sat up with a sudden and gracious dignity of movement, her fair silken tresses falling in soft disorder on her hips; her loosened night-dress disclosed her shoulder; she touched her pink toes with her little hand, and gazed for some moment on the naked foot, worthy to be worshipped by Pericles, and copied by Phidias. Then stretching herself, she yawned like a tigress in the rising sun.

Perhaps Gwynplaine breathed heavily, as we do when we endeavor to restrain our respiration.

"Is any one there?" said she.

She yawned as she spoke, and her very yawn was graceful. Gwynplaine listened to the unfamiliar voice; the voice of a charmer, its accents exquisitely haughty, its caressing intonation softening its native arrogance. Then rising on her knees,—there is an antique statue kneeling thus in the midst of a thousand transparent folds,—she drew the dressing-gown towards her, and springing from the couch stood upright by it—nude; then, suddenly, with the swiftness of an arrow's flight, she was clothed. In the twinkling of an eye the sliken robe was around her. The trailing sleeve concealed her hands; only the

tips of her toes, with little pink nails like those of an infant, were left visible. Having drawn from underneath the dressing-gown a mass of hair which had been imprisoned by it, she crossed behind the couch to the end of the room, and placed her ear to the painted mirror, which was, apparently, a door. Tapping the glass with her finger, she called, "Is any one there? Lord David? Are you come already? What time is it then? Is that you, Barkilphedro?" She turned from the glass. "No! it was not there. Is there any one in the bathroom? Will you answer! Of course not. No one would come that way."

Going to the silver lace curtain, she raised it with her foot, thrust it aside with her shoulder, and entered the marble room. An agonized numbness fell upon Gwynplaine. No possibility of concealment. It was too late to fly. Moreover, he was no longer equal to the exertion. He wished that the earth might open and swallow him up. Anything to hide him.

She saw him. She stared, immensely astonished, but without the slightest nervousness. Then, in a tone of mingled pleasure and contempt, she said, "Why, it is Gwynplaine!" Suddenly, with a rapid spring, for this cat was a panther, she flung herself on his neck. She clasped his head between her naked arms, from which the sleeves in her eagerness, had fallen back.

Suddenly, pushing him back, and holding him by both shoulders with her small claw-like hands, she stood up face to face with him, and began to gaze at him with a strange expression.

It was a fatal glance she gave him with her Aldebaran-like eyes,—a glance at once equivocal and starlike. Gwynplaine watched the blue eye and the black eye, distracted by the double ray of heaven and of hell that shone in the orbs thus fixed on him. The man and the woman threw a malign dazzling reflection one on the other. Both were fascinated, he by her beauty, she by his deformity. Both were in a measure awe-stricken. Pressed down, as by an overwhelming weight, he was speechless.

"Oh!" she cried. "How clever you are. You are come. You found out that I was obliged to leave London. You followed me. That was right. You being here proves you to be a wonder."

The simultaneous return of self-possession acts like a flash of lightning. Gwynplaine, indistinctly warned by a vague, rude, but honest misgiving, drew back, but the pink nails clung to his shoulders and restrained him. Some inexorable power proclaimed its sway over him. He himself, a wild beast, was caged in a wild beast's den. She continued, "Anne, the fool, you know whom I mean—the Queen—ordered me to Windsor without giving any reason. When I arrived she was closeted with her idiot of a Chancellor. But how did you contrive to obtain access to me? That's what I call being a man—obstacles, indeed—there are no such things! You came at a call. You found things out. My name, the Duchess Josiana, you knew, I fancy. Who was it brought you in? No doubt it was the page. Oh, he is clever! I will give him a hundred guineas. Which way did you get in? Tell me! No! don't tell me. I don't want to know. Explanations diminish interest. I prefer the marvellous, and you are hideous enough to be wonderful. You have fallen from the highest heavens, or you have risen from the depths of hell through the devil's trap-door. Nothing can be more natural. The ceiling opened or the floor yawned. A descent in a cloud, or an ascent in a mass of fire and brimstone, that is how you have travelled. You have a right to enter like the gods. Agreed; you are my lover."

Gwynplaine was scared, and listened; his mind growing more irresolute every moment. Now all was certain. Impossible to have any further doubt. That letter! the woman confirmed its meaning. Gwynplaine the lover and the beloved of a duchess! Mighty pride, with its thousand baleful heads, stirred his wretched heart. Vanity, that powerful agent within us, works us measureless evil.

The duchess went on, "Since you are here, it is so decreed. I ask nothing more. There is some one on high, or in hell, who brings us together. The betrothal of Styx and Aurora! Unbridled ceremonies beyond all laws! The very day I first saw you, I said, it is he! I recognize him. He is the monster of my dreams. He shall be mine. We should give destiny a helping hand. Therefore I wrote to you. One question, Gwynplaine, do you believe in predestination? For my part, I have believed in it since I read, in Cicero, Scipio's dream. Ah! I did

not observe it. Dressed like a gentleman! You in fine clothes! Why not! You are a mountebank. All the more reason. A juggler is as good as a lord. Moreover, what are lords? Clowns. You have a noble figure, you are magnificently made. It is wonderful that you should be here. When did you arrive? How long have you been here? Did you see me naked? I am beautiful, am I not? I was going to take my bath. Oh, how I love you! You read my letter! Did you read it yourself? Did any one read it to you? Can you read? Probably you are ignorant. I ask questions, but don't answer them. I don't like the sound of your voice. It is soft. An extraordinary thing like you should snarl, and not speak. You sing harmoniously. I hate it. It is the only thing about you that I do not like. All the rest is terrible,—is grand. In India you would be a god. Were you born with that frightful laugh on your face? No. No doubt it is a penal brand. I do hope you have committed some crime. Come to my arms."

She sank on the couch and made him sit beside her. They found themselves close together unconsciously. What she said passed over him like a mighty storm. He hardly understood the meaning of her whirlwind of words. Her eyes were full of admiration. She spoke tumultuously, frantically, with a voice broken and tender. Her words were music; but their music was to Gwynplaine as a hurricane. Again she fixed her gaze upon him and continued,—

"I feel degraded in your presence, and oh! what happiness that is. How insipid it is to be a grandee. I am noble, what can be more tiresome? Disgrace is a comfort. I am so satiated with respect that I long for contempt. We are all a little erratic, from Venus, Cleopatra, Mesdames de Chevreuse and de Longueville, down to myself. I will make a display of you, I declare. Here's a love affair which will be a blow to my family, the Stuarts. Ah! I breathe again. I have discovered a secret. I am clear of royalty. To be free from its trammels is indeed deliverance. To break down, defy, make and destroy at will, that is true enjoyment. Listen, I love you."

She paused; then with a frightful smile, went on, "I love you, not only because you are deformed; but because you are low. I love monsters, and I love mountebanks. A

lover despised, mocked, grotesque, hideous, exposed to laughter on that pillory called a theatre, has for me an extraordinary attraction. It is tasting the fruit of hell. An infamous lover, how exquisite! To taste the apple, not of Paradise, but of hell; such is my temptation. It is for that I hunger and thirst. I am that Eve, the Eve of the depths. Probably you are, unknown to yourself, a devil. I am in love with a nightmare. You are a moving puppet of which the strings are pulled by a spectre. You are the incarnation of infernal mirth. You are the master I require. I wanted a lover such as those of Medea and Canidia. I felt sure that some night would bring me such a one. You are all that I want. I am talking of a heap of things of which you probably know nothing. Gwynplaine, hitherto I have remained untouched; I give myself to you, pure as a burning ember. You evidently do not believe me; but if you only knew how little I care!"

Her words flowed like a volcanic eruption. Pierce Mount Etna, and you may obtain some idea of that jet of fiery eloquence.

Gwynplaine stammered. "Madame—"

She placed her hand on his mouth. "Silence," she said, "I am studying you. I am unbridled desire, immaculate. I am a vestal bacchante. No man has known me, and I might be the virgin pythoness at Delphos, and have under my naked foot the bronze tripod, where the priests lean their elbows on the skin of the python, whispering questions to the invisible god. My heart is of stone, but it is like those mysterious pebbles which the sea washes to the foot of the rock called Huntly Nabb, at the mouth of the Tees, and which if broken are found to contain a serpent. That serpent is my love. A love which is all-powerful, for it has brought you to me. An impossible distance was between us. I was in Sirius, and you were in Allioth. You have crossed the immeasurable space, and here you are. 'Tis well. Be silent. Take me."

She ceased; he trembled. Then she went on, smiling, "You see, Gwynplaine, to dream is to create; to desire is to summon.

To build up the chimera is to provoke the reality. The all-powerful and terrible mystery will not be defied. It produces result. You are here. Do I dare to lose caste? Yes. Do I dare to be your mistress? Your concu-

bine? Your slave? Your chattel? Joyfully. Gwynplaine, I am woman. Woman is clay longing to become mire. I want to despise myself. That lends a zest to pride.

The alloy of greatness is baseness. They combine in perfection. Despise me, you who are despised. Nothing can be better. Degradation on degradation. What joy! I pluck the double blossom of ignominy. Trample me under foot. You will only love me the more. I am sure of it. Do you understand why I idolize you? Because I despise you. You are so immeasurably below me that I place you on an altar. Bring the highest and lowest depths together, and you have Chaos, and I delight in Chaos. Chaos, the beginning and end of everything. What is Chaos? A huge blot. Out of that blot God made light, and out of that sink the world. You don't know how perverse I can be. Knead a star in mud, and you will have my likeness."

Thus spoke the siren; the loosened robe revealing her virgin bosom.

She went on,—

"A wolf to all beside; a faithful dog to you. How astonished they will all be! The astonishment of fools is amusing. I understand myself. Am I a goddess? Amphitrite gave herself to the Cyclops. *Fluctivoma Amphitrite*. Am I a fairy? Urgele gave herself to Bugryx, a winged man, with eight webbed hands. Am I a princess? Marie Stuart had Rizzio. Three beauties, three monsters. I am greater than they for you are lower than they. Gwynplaine, we were made for one another. The monster that you are outwardly, I am within. Thence my love for you. A caprice? Just so. What is a hurricane but a caprice? Our stars have a certain affinity. Together we are things of night—you in your face, I in my mind. As your countenance is defaced, so is my mind. You, in your turn create me. You come, and my real soul shows itself. I did not know it. It is astonishing. Your coming has evoked the hydra in me, who am a goddess. You reveal my real nature. See how I resemble you. Look at me as if I were a mirror. Your face is my mind. I did not know I was so terrible. I am also, then, a monster. Oh! Gwynplaine, you do amuse me!"

She laughed, a strange and child-like laugh; and, putting her mouth close to his ear whispered,—

"Do you want to see a mad woman ? look at me."

She poured her searching look into Gwynplaine. A look is a philter. Her loosened robe provoked a thousand dangerous feelings. Blind, animal ecstasy was invading his mind, ecstasy combined with agony.

Whilst she spoke, though he felt her words like burning coals, his blood froze within his veins. He had not strength to utter a word.

She stopped and looked at him.

"O, monster !" she cried. She grew wild. Suddenly she seized his hands.

"Gwynplaine, I am the throne ; you are the footstool. Let us join on the same level. Oh, how happy I am in my fall ! I wish all the world could know how abject I am become. It would bow down all the lower. The more man abhors the more does he cringe. It is human nature. Hostile, but reptile ; dragon, but worm. Oh, I am as depraved as are the gods ! They can never say that I am not a king's bastard. I act like a queen. Who was Rodope but a queen loving Pteh, a man with a crocodile's head ? She raised the third pyramid in his honor. Panthesilea loved the centaur, who, being now a star, is named Sagittarius. And what do you say about Anne of Austria ? Mazarin was ugly enough ! Now, you are not only ugly, you are deformed. Ugliness is mean, deformity is grand. Ugliness is the devil's grin behind beauty ; deformity is the reverse of sublimity. It is the back view. Olympus has two aspects. One, by day, shows Apollo ; the other by night, shows Polyphemus. You ! you are a Titan. You would be Behemoth in the forests, Leviathan in the deep, and Typhon in the sewer. You surpass everything. There is the trace of lightning in your deformity ; your face has been battered by the thunderbolt. The jagged contortion of forked lightning has imprinted its mark on your face. It struck you and passed on. A mighty and mysterious wrath has, in a fit of passion, cemented your spirit in a terrible and superhuman form. Hell is a penal furnace, where the iron called Fatality is raised to a white heat. You have been branded with it. To love you, is to understand grandeur. I enjoy that triumph. To be in love with Apollo, a fine effort, forsooth ! Glory is to be measured by the astonishment it creates. I love you. I have dreamt of you night after night. This is my palace. You shall see my

gardens. There are fresh springs under the shrubs ; arbors for lovers ; and beautiful groups of marble statuary by Bernani. Flowers ! there are too many—during the spring the place is on fire with roses. Did I tell you that the queen is my sister ? Do what you like with me. I am made for Jupiter to kiss my feet, and Satan to spit in my face. Are you of any religion ? I am a Papist. My father, James II., died in France, surrounded by Jesuits. I have never felt before as I feel now that I am near you. Oh, how I should like to pass the evening with you, in the midst of music, both reclining on the same cushion, under a purple awning, in a gilded gondola on the soft expanse of ocean. Insult me, beat me, kick me, cuff me, treat me like a brute ; I adore you."

Caresses can roar. If you doubt it, observe the lion's. The woman was horrible, and yet full of grace. The effect was tragic. First he felt the claw, then the velvet of the paw. A feline attack, made up of advances and retreats. There was death as well as sport in this game of come and go. She idolized him, but arrogantly. The result was contagious frenzy. Fatal language, at once inexpressible, violent ; and sweet. The insulter did not insult ; the adorer outraged the object of adoration. She, who buffeted, deified him. Her tones imparted to her violent yet amorous words an indescribable Promethean grandeur. According to Æschylus, in the orgies in honor of the great goddess, the women were smitten by this evil frenzy when they pursued the satyrs under the stars. Such paroxysms raged in the mysterious dances in the grove of Dodona. This woman was as if transfigured—if, indeed we can term that transfiguration which is the antithesis of heaven.

Her hair quivered like a mane ; her robe opened and closed. Nothing could be more attractive than that bosom, full of wild cries. The sunshine of the blue eye mingled with the fire of the black one. She was unearthly.

Gwynplaine, giving way, felt himself vanquished by the deep subtilty of this attack.

"I love you !" she cried.

And she bit him with a kiss.

Homeric clouds were, perhaps, about to be required to encompass Gwynplaine and Josiana, as they did Jupiter and Juno. For Gwynplaine to be loved by a woman who could see, and who saw him ; to feel on his de-

formed mouth the pressure of divine lips, was exquisite and maddening. Before this woman, full of enigmas, all else faded away in his mind. The remembrance of Dea struggled in the shadows with weak cries. There is an antique bas-relief representing the Sphinx devouring a Cupid. The wings of the sweet celestial are bleeding between the fierce, grinning fangs.

Did Gwynplaine love this woman? Has man, like the globe, two poles? Are we, on our inflexible axis, a moving sphere, a star, when seen from afar, mud, when seen more closely, in which night alternates with day? Has the heart two aspects—one on which its love is poured forth in light; the other in darkness? Here a woman of light, there a woman of the sewer. Angels are necessary. Is it possible that demons are also essential? Has the soul the wings of a bat? Does twilight fall fatally for all? Is sin an integral and inevitable part of our destiny? Must we accept evil as part and portion of our whole? Do we inherit sin as a debt? What awful subjects for thought!

Yet a voice tells us that weakness is a crime. Gwynplaine's feelings are not to be described. The flesh, life, terror, lust, an overwhelming intoxication of spirit, and all the shame possible to pride. Was he about to succumb?

She repeated, "I love you!" and flung her frenzied arms around him. Gwynplaine panted.

Suddenly close at hand there rang, clear and distinct, a little bell. It was the little bell inside the wall. The duchess, turning her head, said,—

"What does she want of me?"

Quickly, with the noise of a spring door, the silver panel, with a golden crown chased on it, opened. A compartment of a shaft, lined with royal blue velvet, appeared; and, on a golden salver, a letter. The letter, broad and weighty, was placed so as exhibit the seal, which was a large impression in red wax. The bell continued to tinkle. The open panel almost touched the couch where the duchess and Gwynplaine were sitting.

Leaning over, but still keeping her arm round his neck, she took the letter from the plate, and touched the panel. The compartment closed in, and the bell ceased ringing.

The duchess broke the seal, and, opening the envelope, drew out two documents con-

tained therein and flung it on the floor at Gwynplaine's feet. The impression of the broken seal was still decipherable, and Gwynplaine could distinguish a royal crown over the initial A. The torn envelope lay open before him, so that he could read, "To her Grace the Duchess Josiana." The envelope had contained both vellum and parchment. The former was a small, the latter a large, document. On the parchment was a large Chancery seal in green wax, called Lords' sealing-wax.

The face of the duchess, whose bosom was palpitating, and whose eyes were swimming with passion, became overspread with a slight expression of dissatisfaction.

"Ah!" she said. "What does she send me? A lot of papers! What a spoil-sport that woman is!"

Pushing aside the parchment, she opened the vellum.

"It is her handwriting. It is my sister's hand. It is quite provoking. Gwynplaine, I asked you if you could read. Can you?"

Gwynplaine nodded assent.

She stretched herself at full length on the couch, carefully drew her feet and arms under her robe, with a whimsical affectation of modesty, and, giving Gwynplaine the vellum, watched him with an impassioned look.

"Well! you are mine. Begin your duties, my beloved. Read me what the queen writes."

Gwynplaine took the vellum, unfolded it, and, in a voice tremulous with many emotions, began to read:—

"MADAM,—We are graciously pleased to send to you herewith, sealed and signed by our trusty and well-beloved William Cowper, Lord High Chancellor of England, a copy of a report, showing forth the very important fact that the legitimate son of Linnæus Lord Clancharlie has just been discovered and recognised, bearing the name of Gwynplaine, in the lowest rank of a wandering and vagabond life, among strollers and mountebanks. His false position dates from his earliest days. In accordance with the laws of the country, and in virtue of his hereditary rights, Lord Fermain Clancharlie, son of Lord Linnæus, will be this day admitted, and installed in his position in the House of Lords. Therefore, having regard to your welfare, and wishing to preserve for

your use the property and estates of Lord Clancharlie of Hunkerville, we substitute him in the place of Lord David Dirry-Moir, and recommend him to your good graces. We have caused Lord Fermain to be conducted to Corleone Lodge. We will and command, as sister and as Queen, that the said Fermain Lord Clancharlie, hitherto called Gwynplaine, shall be your husband, and that you shall marry him. Such is our royal pleasure."

While Gwynplaine, in tremulous tones which varied at almost every word, was reading the document, the duchess, half risen from the couch, listened with fixed attention. When Gwynplaine finished, she snatched the letter from his hands.

"Anne R.," she murmured in a tone of abstraction. Then picking up from the floor the parchment she had thrown down, she ran her eye over it. It was the confession of the shipwrecked crew of the *Matutina*, embodied in a report signed by the sheriff of Southwark and by the lord chancellor.

Having perused the report, she read the queen's letter over again. Then she said, "Be it so." And calmly pointing with her finger to the door of the gallery through which he had entered, she added, "Be gone."

Gwynplaine was petrified, and remained immovable. She repeated, in icy tones, "Since you are my husband, begone." Gwynplaine, speechless, and with eyes downcast like a criminal, remained motionless. She added, "You have no right to be here; it is my lover's place." Gwynplaine was like a man transfixed. "Very well," said she, "I must go myself. So you are my husband. Nothing can be better. I hate you." She rose, and with an indescribably haughty gesture of adieu, left the room. The curtain in the doorway of the gallery fell behind her.

## CHAPTER V.

THEY RECOGNIZE, BUT DO NOT KNOW, EACH OTHER.

GWYNPLAINE was alone. Alone, and in presence of the tepid bath and the deserted couch. The confusion in his mind had reached its culminating point. His thoughts no longer resembled thoughts. They over-

flowed and ran riot; it was the anguish of a creature wrestling with perplexity. He felt as if he were awaking from a horrid nightmare. The entrance into unknown spheres is no simple matter.

From the time he had received the duchess's letter, brought by the page, a series of surprising adventures had befallen Gwynplaine, each one less intelligible than the other. Up to this time, though in a dream, he had seen things clearly. Now he could only grope his way. He no longer thought, nor even dreamed. He collapsed. He sank down upon the couch which the duchess had vacated.

Suddenly, he heard a sound of footsteps, and those of a man. The noise came from the opposite side of the gallery to that by which the duchess had departed. The man approached, and his footsteps, though deadened by the carpet, were clear and distinct. Gwynplaine, in spite of his abstraction, listened.

Suddenly, beyond the silver web of curtain which the duchess had left partly open, a door, evidently concealed by the painted glass, opened wide, and there came floating into the room the refrain of an old French song, carolled at the top of a manly and joyous voice,

"Trois petits goretts sur leur fumier  
Juraient comme de porteurs de chaise,"

and a man entered. He wore a sword by his side, a magnificent naval uniform, covered with gold lace, and held in his hand a plumed hat with loops and cockade. Gwynplaine sprang up erect as if moved by springs. He recognized the man, and was, in turn, recognized by him. From their astonished lips came, simultaneously, this double exclamation:—

"Gwynplaine!"

"Tom-Jim-Jack!"

The man with the plumed hat advanced towards Gwynplaine, who stood with folded arms.

"What are you doing here, Gwynplaine?"

"And you, Tom-Jim-Jack, what are you doing here?"

"Oh! I understand. Josiana! a caprice. A mountebank and a monster! The double attraction is too powerful to be resisted. You disguised yourself in order to get here, Gwynplaine?"

"And you, too, Tom-Jim-Jack?"



"Gwynplaine, what does this gentleman's dress mean?"

"Tom-Jim-Jack, what does that officer's uniform mean?"

"Gwynplaine, I answer no questions."

"Neither do I, Tom-Jim-Jack."

"Gwynplaine, my name is not Tom-Jim-Jack."

"Tom-Jim-Jack, my name is not Gwynplaine."

"Gwynplaine, I am here in my own house."

"I am here in my own house, Tom-Jim-Jack."

"I will not have you echo my words. You are ironical; but I've got a cane. An end to your jokes, you wretched fool."

Gwynplaine became ashy pale. "You are a fool yourself, and you shall give me satisfaction for this insult."

"In your booth as much as you like, with fisticuffs."

"Here, and with swords?"

"My friend, Gwynplaine, the sword is a weapon for gentlemen. With it I can only fight my equals. At fisticuffs we are equal; but not so with swords. At the Tadcaster Inn, Tom-Jim-Jack could box with Gwynplaine. At Windsor, the case is altered. Understand this; I am a rear-admiral."

"And I am a peer of England."

The man whom Gwynplaine recognized as Tom-Jim-Jack burst out laughing. "Why not a king? Indeed, you are right. An actor plays every part. You'll tell me next that you are Theseus, Duke of Athens."

"I am a peer of England, and we are going to fight."

"Gwynplaine, this becomes tiresome. Don't play with one who can order you to be flogged. I am Lord David Dirry-Moir."

"And I am Lord Clancharlie."

Again Lord David burst out laughing.

"Well said! Gwynplaine is Lord Clancharlie. That is indeed the name the man must bear who is to win Josiana. Listen, I forgive you, and do you know the reason? It's because we are both lovers of the same woman."

The curtain in the door was lifted, and a voice exclaimed, "You are the two husbands, my lords."

They turned.

"Barkilphedro!" cried Lord David.

It was indeed he; he bowed low to the two lords, with a smile on his face. Some few paces behind him was a gentleman with a

stern and dignified countenance, who carried in his hand a black wand. This gentleman advanced, and, bowing three times to Gwynplaine, said, "I am the Usher of the Black Rod. I come to fetch your lordship, in obedience to Her Majesty's commands."

## BOOK THE EIGHTH.

### *THE CAPITOL AND THINGS AROUND IT.*

#### CHAPTER I.

##### ANALYSIS OF MAJESTIC MATTERS.

IRRESISTIBLE Fate ever carrying him forward, which had now for so many hours showered its surprises on Gwynplaine, and which had transported him to Windsor, transferred him again to London. Visionary realities succeeded each other without a moment's intermission. He could not escape from their influence. Freed from one he met another. He had scarcely time to breathe. Any one who has seen a juggler throwing and catching balls can judge the nature of fate. Those rising and falling projectiles are like men tossed in the hands of Destiny—projectiles and play-things.

On the evening of the same day, Gwynplaine was an actor in an extraordinary scene. He was seated on a bench covered with fleurs-de-lys; over his silken clothes he wore a robe of scarlet velvet, lined with white silk, with a cape of ermine, and on his shoulders two bands of ermine embroidered with gold. Around him were men of all ages, young and old, seated like him on benches with fleur-de-lys, and dressed like him in ermine and purple. In front of him other men were kneeling, clothed in black silk gowns. Some of them were writing; opposite, and a short distance from him, he observed steps, a raised platform, a dais, a large escutcheon glittering between a lion and a unicorn, and at the top of the steps, on the platform under the dais, resting against the escutcheon, was a gilded chair with a crown over it. This was a throne. The throne of Great Britain.

Gwynplaine, himself a peer of England, was in the House of Lords. How Gwynplaine's introduction to the House of Lords came about, we will now explain. Throughout the day from morning to night from Windsor to London, from Corleone Lodge to

Westminster Hall, he had step by step mounted higher in the social grade. At each step he grew giddier. He had been conveyed from Windsor in a royal carriage with a peer's escort. There is not much difference between a guard of honor, and a prisoner's. On that day, travellers on the London and Windsor road saw a galloping cavalcade of gentlemen pensioners of Her Majesty's household, escorting two carriages drawn at a rapid pace. In the first carriage sat the Usher of the Black Rod, his wand in his hand. In the second, was to be seen a large hat with white plumes, throwing into shadow and hiding the face underneath it. Who was it who was being thus hurried on—a prince? a prisoner? It was Gwynplaine.

It looked as if they were conducting some one to the Tower, unless, indeed, they were escorting him to the House of Lords. The queen had done things well. As it was for her future brother-in-law, she had provided an escort from her own household. The officer of the Usher of the Black Rod rode on horseback at the head of the cavalcade. The Usher of the Black Rod carried, on a cushion placed on the seat of the carriage, a black portfolio stamped with the royal crown. At Brentford, the last relay before London, the carriages and escort halted. A four-horse carriage of tortoise-shell, with two postilions, a coachman in a wig, and four footmen, was in waiting. The wheels, steps, springs, pole, and all the fittings of this carriage were gilt. The horses' harness were of silver. This state coach was of an ancient and extraordinary shape, and would have been distinguished by its grandeur among the fifty-one celebrated carriages of which Roubo has left us drawings.

The Usher of the Black Rod and his officer alighted. The latter, having lifted the cushion, on which rested the royal portfolio, from the seat in the postchaise, carried it on outstretched hands, and stood behind the Usher. He first opened the door of the empty carriage, then the door of that occupied by Gwynplaine, and, with downcast eyes, respectfully invited him to descend. Gwynplaine left the chaise, and took his seat in the carriage. The Usher carrying the rod, and the officer supporting the cushion, followed, and took their places on the low front seat provided for pages in old state coaches. The inside of the carriage was lined with white

satin trimmed with Binche silk, with tufts and tassels of silver. The roof was painted with armorial bearings. The postilions of the chaises they were leaving were dressed in the royal livery. The attendants of the carriage they now entered wore a different but very magnificent livery.

Gwynplaine, in spite of his bewildered state in which he felt quite overcome, remarked the gorgeously-attired footmen, and asked the Usher of the Black Rod,—

"Whose livery is that?"

He answered,—

"Yours, my lord."

The House of Lords was to sit that evening. *Curia erat serena*, run the old records. In England parliamentary work is by preference undertaken at night. It once happened that Sheridan began a speech at midnight and finished it at sunrise.

The two post-chaises returned to Windsor. Gwynplaine's carriage set out for London. This ornamented four-horse carriage proceeded at a walk from Brentford to London, as befitted the dignity of the coachman. Gwynplaine's servitude to ceremony was beginning in the shape of his solemn-looking coachman. The delay was, moreover, apparently prearranged; and we shall see presently its probable motive.

Night was falling, though it was not quite dark, when the carriage stopped at the King's Gate, a large sunken door between two turrets, connecting Whitehall with Westminster. The escort of gentlemen pensioners formed a circle around the carriage. A footman jumped down from behind it and opened the door. The Usher of the Black Rod, followed by the officer carrying the cushion, got out of the carriage, and addressed Gwynplaine.

"My lord, be pleased to alight. I beg your lordship to keep your hat on."

Gwynplaine wore under his travelling cloak the suit of black silk, which he had not changed since the previous evening. He had no sword. He left his cloak in the carriage. Under the arched way of the King's Gate there was a small side door, raised some few steps above the road. In ceremonial processions the greatest personage never walks first.

The Usher of the Black Rod, followed by his officer, walked first; Gwynplaine followed. They ascended the steps, and entered by the side door. Presently they were in a wide,

circular room, with a pillar in the centre, the lower part of a turret. The room, being on the ground floor, was lighted by narrow windows in the pointed arches, which served but to make darkness visible. Twilight often lends solemnity to a scene. Obscurity is in itself majestic.

In this room, thirteen men, disposed in ranks, were standing; there in the front row, six in the second row, and four behind. In the front row one wore a crimson velvet gown; the other two, gowns of the same color, but of satin. All three had the arms of England embroidered on their shoulders. The second rank wore tunics of white silk, each one having a different coat-of-arms emblazoned in front. The last row were clad in black silk, and were thus distinguished. The first wore a blue cape. The second had a scarlet St. George embroidered in front. The third, two embroidered crimson crosses, in front and behind. The fourth had a collar of black sable fur. All were uncovered, wore wigs, and carried swords. Their faces were scarcely visible in the dim light, neither could they see Gwynplaine's face.

The Usher of the Black Rod, raising his wand, said,—

"My Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, I, the Usher of the Black Rod, first officer of the presence chamber, hand your lordship over to Garter King-at-Arms."

The person clothed in velvet, quitting his place in the ranks bowed to the ground before Gwynplaine, and said,—

"My Lord Fermain Clancharlie, I am Garter, Principal King-at-Arms of England. I am the officer appointed and installed by his grace the Duke of Norfolk, hereditary Earl Marshal. I have sworn obedience to the king, peers, and knights of the garter. The day of my installation, when the Earl Marshal of England anointed me by pouring a goblet of wine on my head, I solemnly promised to be attentive to the nobility; to avoid bad company; to excuse, rather than accuse, gentlefolks; and to assist widows and virgins. It is I who have the charge of arranging the funeral ceremonies of peers, and the supervision of their armorial bearings. I place myself at the orders of your lordship."

The first of those wearing satin tunics, having bowed deeply, said,

"My lord, I am Clarenceaux, Second King-at-Arms of England. I am the officer who arranges the obsequies of nobles below the rank of peers. I am at your lordship's disposal."

The other wearer of the satin tunic, bowed, and spoke thus,—

"My lord, I am Norroy, Third King-at-Arms of England. Command me."

The second row, erect and without bowing advanced a pace. The right-hand man said,—

"My lord, we are the six Dukes-at-Arms of England. I am York."

Then each of the heralds, or Dukes-at-Arms, speaking in turn, proclaimed his title.

"I am Lancaster."

"I am Richmond."

"I am Chester."

"I am Somerset."

"I am Windsor."

The coats-of-arms embroidered on their breasts were those of the counties and towns from which they took their names.

The third rank, dressed in black, remained silent. Garter King-at-Arms, pointing them out to Gwynplaine, said,—

"My lord, these are the four Pursuivants-at-Arms. Blue Mantle."

The man with the blue cape bowed.

"Rouge Dragon."

He with the St. George inclined his head.

"Rouge Croix."

He with the scarlet crosses saluted.

"Portcullis."

He with the sable fur collar made his obeisance.

On a sign from the King-at-Arms, the first of the pursuivants, Blue Mantle, stepped forward and received from the officer of the Usher the cushion of silver cloth, and crown-emblazoned portfolio. And the King-at-Arms said to the Usher of the Black Rod,—

"Proceed; I leave in your hands the introduction of his lordship!"

The observance of these customs, and also of others which will now be described, were the old ceremonies in use prior to the time of Henry VIII., and which Anne for some time attempted to revive. There is nothing like it in existence now. Nevertheless, the House of Lords thinks that it is unchangeable; and, if Conservatism exists anywhere, it is there.

It changes, nevertheless. *E pur si muove.*

For instance, what has become of the may-pole—which the citizens of London erected on the 1st of May, when the peers went down to the House? The last one was erected in 1713. Since then the may-pole has disappeared. Disuse.

Outwardly, unchangeable; inwardly, mutable. Take, for example, the title of Albe-marle. It sounds eternal. Yet it has been through six different families—Odo, Mandeville, Bethune, Plantagenet, Beauchamp, Monck. Under the title of Leicester five different names have been verged—Beaumont, Breose, Dudley, Sydney, Coke. Under Lincoln, six; under Pembroke, seven. The families change, under unchanging titles. A superficial historian believes in immutability. In reality it does not exist. Man can never be more than a wave; humanity is the ocean.

Aristocracy is proud of what women consider a reproach—age! Yet both cherish the same illusion but they do not change. It is probable the House of Lords will not recognize itself in the foregoing description, nor yet in that which follows, thus resembling the once pretty woman, who objects to have any wrinkles. The mirror is ever a scapecoat, yet its truths cannot be contested. To portray exactly, constitutes the duty of an historian. The King-at-Arms, turning to Gwynplaine, said,—

“Be pleased to follow me, my lord.” And added, “You will be saluted. Your lordship, in returning the salute, will be pleased merely to raise the brim of your hat.”

They moved off in procession, towards a door at the far side of the room. The Usher of the Black Rod walked in front; then Blue Mantle, carrying the cushion; then the King-at-Arms; and after him came Gwynplaine, wearing his hat. The rest, kings-at-arms, heralds, and pursuivants, remained in the circular room. Gwynplaine, preceded by the Usher of the Black Rod, and escorted by the King-at-Arms, passed from room to room, in a direction which it would now be impossible to trace, the old houses of parliament having been pulled down. Amongst others, he crossed the Gothic state-chamber in which took place the last meeting of James II. and Monmouth; and whose walls witnessed the useless debasement of the cowardly nephew at the feet of his vindictive uncle. On the walls of this chamber hung, in chronological order, nine full-length portraits of

former peers, with their dates—Lord Nansladron, 1305; Lord Baliol, 1306; Lord Benede, 1314; Lord Cantilupe, 1356; Lord Montbegon, 1357; Lord Tibitot, 1373; Lord Zouch of Codnor, 1615; Lord Bella-Aqua, with no date; Lord Harren and Surrey, Count of Blois, also without date.

It being now dark, lamps were burning at intervals in the galleries. Brass chandeliers, with wax candles, illuminated the rooms, lighting them like the side aisles of a church. None but officials were present. In one room, which the procession crossed, stood, with heads respectfully lowered, the four clerks of the signet, and the Clerk of the Council. In another room stood the distinguished Knight Banneret, Philip Sydenham, of Brympton, in Somersetshire. The Knight Banneret is a title conferred in the time of war, under the unfurled royal standard. In another room was the senior baronet of England, Sir Edmund Bacon, of Suffolk, heir of Sir Nicholas Bacon, styled, *Primus baronatorum Anglicæ*. Behind Sir Edmund was an armor-bearer with an arquebus, and an esquire carrying the arms of Ulster, the baronets being the hereditary defenders of the province of Ulster in Ireland. In another room was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with his four accountants, and the two deputies of the Lord Chamberlain, *appointed to cleave the tallies*.\*

At the entrance of a corridor covered with matting, which was the communication between the Lower and the Upper House, Gwynplaine was saluted by Sir Thomas Mansell, of Margam, Comptroller of the Queen's Household and Member for Glamorgan; and at the exit from the corridor by a deputation of one for every two of the Barons of the Cinque Ports, four on the right and four on the left, the Cinque Ports being eight in number. William Hastings did obeisance for Hastings; Matthew Aylmor, for Dover; Josias Burchett, for Sandwich; Sir Philip Boteler, for Hythe; John Brewer, for New Romney; Edward Southwell, for the town of Rye; James Hayes, for

\* The author is apparently mistaken. The Chamberlain of the Exchequer divided the wooden lathes into tallies, which were given out when disbursing coin, and checked or tallied when accounting for it. It was in burning the old tallies in an oven, that the Houses of Parliament were destroyed by fire.—TRANSLATOR.

Winchelsea; George Nailor, for Seaford. As Gwynplaine was about to return the salute, the King-at-Arms reminded him in a low voice of the etiquette, "Only the brim of your hat, my lord." Gwynplaine did as directed. He now entered the so-called Painted Chamber, in which there was no painting, except a few of saints, and amongst them St. Edward, in the high arches of the long and deep-pointed windows, which were divided by what formed the ceiling of Westminster Hall and the floor of the Painted Chamber. On the far side of the wooden barrier which divided the room from end to end, stood the three Secretaries of State, men of mark. The functions of the first of these officials comprised the supervision of all affairs relating to the South of England, Ireland, the Colonies, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Turkey. The second had charge of the north of England, and watched affairs in the Low Countries, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and Russia. The third, a Scot, had charge of Scotland. The two first-mentioned were English: one of them being the Honorable Robert Harley, Member for the borough of New Radnor. A Scotch member, Mungo Graham, Esquire, a relation of the Duke of Montrose, was present. All bowed, without speaking to Gwynplaine, who returned the salute by touching his hat. The barrier-keeper lifted the wooden arm which, pivoting on a hinge, formed the entrance to the far side of the Painted Chamber, where stood the long table, covered with green cloth, reserved for peers. A branch of lighted candles stood on the table. Gwynplaine, preceded by the Usher of the Black Rod, Garter King-at-Arms, and Blue Mantle, penetrated into this privileged compartment. The barrier-keeper closed the opening immediately Gwynplaine had passed. The King-at-Arms, having entered the precincts of the privileged compartment, halted. The Painted Chamber was a spacious apartment. At the further end, upright, beneath the royal escutcheon which was placed between the two windows, stood two old men, in red velvet robes, with two rows of ermine trimmed with gold lace on their shoulders, and wearing wigs, and hats with white plumes. Through the openings of their robes might be detected silk garments, and sword hilts. Motionless behind them stood a man dressed in black silk, holding on high a great mace

of gold surmounted by a crowned lion. It was the Mace-bearer of the Peers of England. The lion is their crest. *Et les Lions ce sont les Barons et li Per*, runs the manuscript chronicle of Bertrand Duguesclin.

The King-at-Arms pointed out the two persons in velvet, and whispered to Gwynplaine,—

"My lord, these are your equals. Be pleased to return their salute exactly as they make it. These two peers are barons, and have been named by the Lord Chancellor as your sponsors. They are very old, and almost blind. They will, themselves, introduce you to the House of Lords. The first is Charles Mildmay, Lord Fitzwalter, sixth on the roll of barons; the second is Augustus Arundel, Lord Arundel of Trerice, thirty-eighth on the roll of barons." The King-at-Arms having advanced a step towards the two old men, proclaimed "Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie, Baron Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone, in Sicily, greets your lordships!" The two peers raised their hats to the full extent of the arm, and then replaced them. Gwynplaine did the same. The Usher of the Black Rod stepped forward, followed by Blue Mantle and Garter King-at-Arms. The Mace-bearer took up his post in front of Gwynplaine, the two peers at his side—Lord Fitzwalter on the right, and Lord Arundel of Trerice on the left. Lord Arundel, the elder of the two, was very feeble. He died the following year, bequeathing to his grandson John, a minor, the title which became extinct in 1768. The procession, leaving the Painted Chamber, entered a gallery in which were rows of pilasters, and between the spaces were sentinels, alternately pike-men of England, and halberdiers of Scotland. The Scotch halberdiers were magnificent killed soldiers, worthy to encounter later on at Fontenoy the French cavalry, and the royal cuirassiers, whom their colonel thus addressed: "*Messieurs les maitres, assurez vos chapeaux. Nous allons avoir l'honneur de charger.*" The captain of these soldiers saluted Gwynplaine, and the peers, his sponsors, with their swords. The men saluted with their pikes and halberds.

At the end of the gallery shone a large door, so magnificent that its two folds seemed to be masses of gold. On each side of the door, there stood, upright and motionless, men who were called door-keepers. Just be-

fore you came to this door, the gallery widened out into a circular space. In this space was an arm-chair with an immense back, and on it, judging by his wig and from the amplitude of his robes, was a distinguished person. It was William Cowper, Lord Chancellor of England. To be able to cap a royal infirmity with a similar one has its advantages. William Cowper was short-sighted. Anne had also defective sight, but in a lesser degree. The near-sightedness of William Cowper found favor in the eyes of the short-sighted queen, and induced her to appoint him Lord Chancellor, and Keeper of the Royal Conscience. William Cowper's upper-lip was thin, and his lower one thick—a sign of semi-good-nature.

The circular space was lighted by a lamp hung from the ceiling. The Lord Chancellor was sitting gravely in his large arm-chair; at his right was the Clerk of the Crown, and at his left the Clerk of the Parliaments.

Each of the clerks had before him an open register and an ink-horn.

Behind the Lord Chancellor was his mace-bearer, holding the mace with the crown on the top, besides the train-bearer and purse-bearer, in large wigs.

All these officers are still in existence. On a little stand, near the woosack, was a sword, with a gold hilt and sheath, and belt of crimson velvet.

Behind the Clerk of the Crown was an officer holding in his hands the coronation robe.

Behind the Clerk of the Parliaments another officer held a second robe, which was that of a peer.

The robes, both of scarlet velvet, lined with white silk, and having bands of ermine trimmed with gold lace over the shoulders, were similar, except that the ermine band was wider on the coronation robe.

The third officer, who was the librarian, carried on a square of Flanders leather, the red book, a little volume bound in red morocco, containing a list of the peers and commons, besides a few blank leaves and a pencil, which it was the custom to present to each new member on his entering the House.

Gwynplaine, between the two peers, his sponsors, brought up the procession, which stopped before the woosack.

The two peers, who introduced him, uncovered their heads, and Gwynplaine did likewise.

The King-at-Arms received from the hands of Blue Mantle the cushion of silver cloth, knelt down, and presented the black port-folio on the cushion to the Lord Chancellor.

The Lord Chancellor took the black port-folio, and handed it to the Clerk of the Parliament.

The Clerk received it ceremoniously, and then sat down.

The Clerk of the Parliament opened the portfolio, and arose.

The portfolio contained the two usual messages—the royal patent addressed to the House of Lords; and the writ of summons.

The Clerk read aloud these two messages, with respectful deliberation, standing,

The writ of summons, addressed to Fermain Lord Chancharlie, concluded with the accustomed formalities:—

"We strictly enjoin you, on the faith and allegiance that you owe, to come and take your place in person among the prelates and peers sitting in our Parliament at Westminster, for the purpose of giving your advice, in all honor and conscience, on the business of the kingdom and of the Church."

The reading of the messages being concluded, the Lord Chancellor raised his voice,—

"The message of the Crown has been read. Lord Clancharlie, does your lordship renounce transubstantiation, adoration of saints, and the mass?"

Gwynplaine bowed.

"The test has been administered," said the Lord Chancellor.

And the clerk of the Parliament resumed,—

"His lordship has taken the test."

The Lord Chancellor added,—

"My Lord Chancharlie, you can take your seat."

"So be it," said the two sponsors.

The King-at-Arms rose, took the sword from the stand, and buckled it round Gwynplaine's waist.

"Ce faict," says the old Norman charter, "le pair prend son espée, et monte aux hauts sièges, et assiste a l'audience."

Gwynplaine heard a voice behind him, which said,—

"I array your lordship in a peer's robe."

At the same time, the officer who spoke to him, who was holding the robe, placed it on him, and tied the black strings of the ermine cape round his neck.

Gwynplaine, the scarlet robe on his shoulders, and the golden sword by his side, was attired like the peers on his right and left.

The librarian presented to him the red book, and put it in the pocket of his waistcoat.

The King-at-Arms murmured in his ear,—  
“My lord, on entering, will bow to the royal chair.”

The royal chair is the throne.

Meanwhile the two clerks were writing, each at his table—one on the register of the Crown; the other on the register of the House.

Then both—the Clerk of the Crown preceding the other—brought their books to the Lord Chancellor, who signed them. Having signed the two registers, the Lord Chancellor rose.

“Fermain Lord Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie, Baron Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, be you welcome among your peers, the lords spiritual and temporal, of Great Britain.”

Gwynplaine's sponsors touched his shoulder.

He turned round.

The folds of the great gilded door at the end of the gallery opened.

It was the door of the House of Lords.

Thirty-six hours only had elapsed since Gwynplaine, surrounded by a different procession, had entered the iron door of Southwark jail.

What shadowy chimeras had passed, with terrible rapidity through his brain! Chimeras which were hard facts; rapidity, which was a capture by assault!

## CHAPTER II.

### IMPARTIALITY.

THE creation of an equality with the king called Peerage, was, in barbarous epochs, a useful fiction. This rudimentary political expedient produced in France and England different results. In France, the peer was a mock king; in England, a real prince—less grand than in France, but more genuine: we might say less, but worse.

Peerage was born in France; the date is uncertain—under Charlemagne, says the legend; under Robert le Sage, says history;

and history is not more to be relied on than legend. Favin writes:—“The King of France wished to attach to himself the great of his kingdom, by the magnificent title of peers, as if they were his equals.”

Peerage soon thrust forth branches, and from France passed over to England.

The English peerage has been a great fact, and almost a mighty institution. It had for precedent the Saxon wittenagemote. The Danish thane and the Norman vavassour commingled in the baron. Baron is the same as *vir*, which is translated into Spanish by *varon*, and which signifies, *par excellence*, “Man.” As early as 1075, the barons made themselves felt by the king—and by what a king! By William the Conqueror. In 1086 they laid the foundation of feudality, and its basis was the “Doomsday Book.” Under John Lackland came conflict. The French peerage took the high hand with Great Britain, and demanded that the king of England should appear at their Bar. Great was the indignation of the English barons. At the coronation of Philip Augustus, the King of England, as Duke of Normandy, carried the first square banner, and the Duke of Guyenne the second. Against this king, a vassal of the foreigner, the War of the Barons burst forth. The barons imposed on the weak-minded King John, Magna Charta, from which sprung the House of Lords. The pope took part with the king, and excommunicated the lords. The date was 1215, and the pope was Innocent III., who wrote the “Veni, Sancte Spiritus,” and who sent to John Lackland the four cardinal virtues in the shape of four gold rings. The Lords persisted. The duél continued through many generations. Pembroke struggled. 1248 was the year of “the provisions of Oxford.” Twenty-four barons limited the king's powers, discussed him, and called a Knight from each county to take part in the widened breach. Here was the dawn of the Commons. Later on, the Lords added two citizens from each city, and two burgesses from each borough. It arose from this, that up to the time of Elizabeth the peers were judges of the validity of elections to the House of Commons. From their jurisdiction sprang the proverb that the members returned ought to be without the three P's—*sine Prece, sine Pretio, sine Poculo*. This did not obviate rotten bor-

oughs. In 1293, the Court of Peers in France had still the King of England under their jurisdiction; and Philippe le Bel cited Edward I. to appear before him. Edward I. was the king who ordered his son to boil him down after death, and to carry his bones to the wars. Under the follies of their kings the lords felt the necessity of fortifying parliament. They divided it into two chambers, the upper and the lower. The lords arrogantly kept the supremacy. "If it happens that any member of the Commons should be so bold as to speak to the prejudice of the House of Lords, he is called to the bar of the House to be reprimanded, and, occasionally, to be sent to the Tower." There is the same distinction in voting. In the House of Lords they vote one by one, beginning with the junior, called the *puisine baron*. Each peer answers "*Content*," or "*non-Content*." In the Commons they vote together, by "*Aye*," or "*No*," in a crowd. The Commons accuse, the peers judge. The peers, in their disdain of figures, delegated to the Commons who were to profit by it, the superintendence of the Exchequer, thus named, according to some, after the table-cover, which was like a chess-board, and according to others, from the drawers of the old safe, where was kept, behind an iron grating, the treasure of the kings of England. The "*Year-Book*" dates from the end of the thirteenth century. In the War of the Roses the weight of the Lords was thrown, now on the side of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, now on the side of Edmund, Duke of York. Wat Tyler, the Lollards, Warwick the King-maker, all that anarchy from which freedom is to spring, had for foundation, avowed or secret, the English feudal system. The Lords were usefully jealous of the Crown; for to be jealous is to be watchful. They circumscribed the royal initiative, diminished the category of cases of high treason, raised up pretended Richards against Henry IV., appointed themselves arbitrators, judged the question of the three crowns between the Duke of York and Margaret of Anjou, and at need levied armies, and fought their battles of Shrewsbury, Tewkesbury, and St. Albans, sometimes winning, sometimes losing. Before this, in the thirteenth century, they had gained the battle of Lewes, and had driven from the kingdom the four brothers of the king, bastards of Queen Isabella by the Count de la Marche;

all four usurers, who extorted money from Christians by means of the Jews; half princes, half sharpers—a thing common enough in more recent times, but not held in good odor in those days. Up to the fifteenth century the Norman Duke peeped out in the King of England, and the acts of parliament were written in French. From the reign of Henry VII., by the will of the Lords, these were written in English. England, Britain under Uther Pendragon; Roman under Cæsar; Saxon under the Heptarchy; Danish under Harold; Norman after William, then became, thanks to the lords, English. After that she became Anglican. To have one's religion at home is a great power. A foreign pope drags down the national life. A Mecca is an octopus, and devours it. In 1534, London bowed out Rome. The peerage adopted the reformed religion, and the Lords accepted Luther. Here we have the answer to the excommunication of 1215. It was agreeable to Henry VIII.; but, in other respects, the Lords were a trouble to him. As a bulldog to a bear, so was the House of Lords to Henry VIII. When Wolsey robbed the nation of Whitehall, and when Henry robbed Wolsey of it, who complained? Four lords—Darcie, of Chichester; Saint John of Bletsho; and (two Norman names) Mountjoie and Mouteagle. The king usurped. The peerage encroached. There is something in hereditary power which is incorruptible. Hence the insubordination of the Lords. Even in Elizabeth's reign the barons were restless. From this resulted the tortures at Durham. Elizabeth was as a farthingale over an executioner's block. Elizabeth assembled Parliament as seldom as possible, and reduced the House of Lords to sixty-five members, amongst whom there was but one marquis (Winchester), and not a single duke. In France the kings felt the same jealousy and carried out the same elimination. Under Henry III. there were no more than eight dukedoms in the peerage, and it was to the great vexation of the king that the Baron de Mantes, the Baron de Courcy, the Baron de Coulommiers, the Baron de Chateauneuf-en-Thimerais, the Baron de la Ferè-en-Lardenois, the Baron de Mortagne, and some others besides, maintained themselves as barons—peers of France. In England the crown saw the peerage diminish with pleasure. Under Anne, to quote 'but one example, the peerages become extinct



since the twelfth century amounted to five hundred and sixty-five. The War of the Roses had begun the extermination of dukes, which the axe of Mary Tudor completed. This was, indeed, the decapitation of the nobility. To prune away the dukes was to cut off its head. Good policy, perhaps; but it is better to corrupt than to decapitate. James I. was of this opinion. He restored dukedoms. He made a duke of his favorite Villiers, who had made him a pig;\* a transformation from the duke feudal to the duke courtier. This sowing was to bring forth a rank harvest: Charles II. was to make two of his mistresses duchesses—Barbara of Southampton, and Louise de la Querouel of Portsmouth. Under Anne there were to be twenty-fives dukes, of whom three were to be foreigners, Cumberland, Cambridge, and Schomberg. Did this court policy, invented by James I., succeed? No. The House of Peers was irritated by the effort to shackle it by intrigue. It was irritated against James I., it was irritated against Charles I., who, we may observe, may have had something to do with the death of his father, just as Marie de Medicis may have had something to do with the death of her husband. There was a rupture between Charles I. and the peerage. The lords, who under James I., had tried at their bar extortion, in the person of Bacon, under Charles I., tried treason, in the person of Strafford. They had condemned Bacon,—they condemned Strafford. One had lost his honor, the other lost his life. Charles I. was first beheaded in the person of Strafford. The Lords lent their aid to the Commons. The king convokes Parliament to Oxford, the revolution convokes it to London. Forty-four peers side with the King, twenty-two with the Republic. From this combination of the people with the Lords arose the Bill of Rights—a sketch of the French *Droits de l'homme*, a vague shadow flung back from the depths of futurity by the revolution of France on the revolution of England.

Such were the services of the peerage. Involuntary ones, we admit, and dearly purchased, because the said peerage is a huge parasite. But considerable services, nevertheless.

The despotic work of Louis XI., of Richelieu, and of Louis XIV., the creation of a

sultan, levelling taken for true equality, the bastinado given by the sceptre, the common abasement of the people, all these Turkish tricks in France the peers prevented in England. The aristocracy was a wall, banking up the king on one side, sheltering the people on the other. They redeemed their arrogance towards the people by their insolence towards the King. Simon, Earl of Leicester, said to Henry III.—“*King, thou hast lied!*” The Lords curbed the crown, and grated against their kings in the tenderest point, that of vengery. Every lord, passing through a royal park, had the right to kill a deer; in the house of the king the peer was at home; in the Tower of London the scale of allowance for the king was no more than that for a peer, viz., twelve pounds sterling per week. This was the House of Lords’ doing.

Yet more. We owe to it the deposition of kings. The Lords ousted John Lackland, degraded Edward II., deposed Richard II., broke the power of Henry VI., and made Cromwell a possibility. What a Louis XIV. there was in Charles I.? Thanks to Cromwell, it remained latent. By-the-bye, we may here observe, that Cromwell himself, though no historian seems to have noticed the fact, aspired to the peerage. This is why he married Elizabeth Bouchier, descendant and heiress of a Cromwell, Lord Bouchier whose peerage became extinct in 1491, and of a Bouchier, Lord Robesart, another peerage extinct in 1429. Carried on with the formidable increase of important events, he found the suppression of a king a shorter way to power than the recovery of a peerage. A ceremonial of the Lords, at times omnious, could reach even to the king. Two men-at-arms from the Tower, with their axes on their shoulders, between whom an accused peer stood at the bar of the house, might have been there in like attendance on the king as on any other nobleman. For five centuries the House of Lords acted on a system, and carried it out with determination. They had their days of idleness and weakness, as, for instance, that strange time when they allowed themselves to be seduced by the vessels loaded with cheeses, hams, and Greek wines sent them by Julius II. The English aristocracy was restless, haughty, ungovernable, watchful, and patriotically mistrustful. It was that aristocracy which, at the end of the seventeenth century, by act the tenth of the

\* Villiers called James I., “*Votre cochonnerie.*”

year 1694, deprived the borough of Stockbridge in Hampshire, of the right of sending members to Parliament, and forced the Commons to declare null the election for that borough, stained by papistical fraud. It imposed the test on James, Duke of York, and, on his refusal to take it, excluded him from the throne. He reigned, notwithstanding; but the Lords wound up by calling him to account and banishing him. That aristocracy has had, in its long duration, some instinct of progress. It has always given out a certain quantity of appreciable light, except now towards its end, which is at hand. Under James II. it maintained in the Lower House the proportion of three hundred and forty-six burgesses against ninety-two knights. The sixteen barons, by courtesy, of the Cinque Ports were more than counterbalanced by the fifty citizens of the twenty-five cities. Though corrupt and egotistic, that aristocracy was, in some instances, singularly impartial. It is harshly judged. History keeps all its compliments for the Commons. The justice of this is doubtful. We consider the part played by the Lords a very great one. Oligarchy is the independence of a barbarous state, but it is an independence. Take Poland, for instance, nominally a kingdom, really a republic. The peers of England held the throne in suspicion and guardianship. Time after time they have made their power more felt than that of the Commons. They gave check to the king. Thus, in that remarkable year, 1694, The Triennial Parliament Bill, rejected by the Commons, in consequence of the objections of William III., was passed by the Lords. William III., in his irritation, deprived the Earl of Bath of the governorship of Pendennis Castle, and Viscount Mordaunt of all his offices. The House of Lords was the republic of Venice in the heart of the royalty of England. To reduce the king to a doge was its object; and, in proportion as it decreased the power of the crown, it increased that of the people. Royalty knew this, and hated the peerage. Each endeavored to lessen the other. What was thus lost by each was proportionate profit to the people. Those two blind powers, monarchy and oligarchy, could not see that they were working for the benefit of a third, which was democracy. What a delight it was to the crown, in the last century, to be able to hang a peer, Lord Ferrers!

However, they hung him with a silken rope. How polite!

"They would not have hung a peer of France," the Duke of Richelieu haughtily remarked. Granted. They would have beheaded him. Still more polite!

Montmorency Tancarville signed himself *peer of France and England*; thus throwing the English peerage into the second rank. The peers of France were higher and less powerful, holding to rank more than to authority, and to precedence more than to domination. There was between them and the Lords that shade of difference which separates vanity from pride. With the peers of France, to take precedence of foreign princes, of Spanish grandees, of Venetian patricians; to see seated on the lower benches the Marshals of France, the Constable and the Admiral of France, were he even Comte de Toulouse and son of Louis XIV.; to draw a distinction between duchies in the male and female line; to maintain the proper distance between a simple *comté*, like Armagnac or Albret and a *comté patrie*, like Evreux; to wear by right, at five-and-twenty, the blue ribbon of the golden fleece; to counterbalance the Duke de la Tremoille, the most ancient peer of the court, with the Duke Uzès, the most ancient peer of the parliament; to claim as many pages and horses to their carriages as an elector; to be called *monseigneur* by the first President; to discuss whether the Duke de Maine dates his peerage as the Comte d'Eu, from 1458; to cross the grand chamber diagonally, or by the side,—such things were grave matters. Grave matters with the Lords were the Navigation Act, the Test Act, the enrolment of Europe in the service of England, the command of the sea, the expulsion of the Stuarts, war with France. On one side, etiquette above all; on the other, empire above all. The peers of England had the substance, the peers of France the shadow.

To conclude, the House of Lords was a starting point; towards civilization this is an immense thing. It had the honor to found a nation. It was the first incarnation of the unity of the people: English resistance, that obscure but all-powerful force, was born in the House of Lords. The barons, by a series of acts of violence against royalty, have paved the way for its eventual downfall. The House of Lords at the present day is somewhat sad and astonished at what it has

unwillingly and unintentionally done, all the more that it is irrevocable.

What are concessions? Restitutions;—and nations know it.

“I grant,” says the king.

“I get back my own,” says the people.

The House of Lords believed that it was creating the privileges of the peerage, and it has produced the rights of the citizen. That vulture, aristocracy, has hatched the eagle's egg of liberty.

And now the egg is broken, the eagle is soaring, the vulture dying.

Aristocracy is at its last gasp; England is growing up.

Still, let us be just towards the aristocracy. It entered the scale against royalty, and was its counterpoise. It was an obstacle to despotism. It was a barrier. Let us thank and bury it.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE OLD HALL.

NEAR Westminster Abbey was an old Norman palace which was burnt in the time of Henry VIII. Its wings were spared. In one of them Edward VI. placed the House of Lords, in the other the House of Commons. Neither the two wings, nor the two chambers are now in existence. The whole has been rebuilt.

We have already said, and we must repeat, that there is no resemblance between the House of Lords of the present day, and that of the past. In demolishing the ancient palace they somewhat demolished its ancient usages. The strokes of the pickaxe on the monument produce their counter-strokes on customs and charters. An old stone cannot fall without dragging down with it an old law. Place in a round room a parliament, which has been hitherto held in a square room, and it will no longer be the same thing. A change in the shape of the shell changes the shape of the fish inside.

If you wish to preserve an old thing, human or divine, a code or a dogma, a nobility or a priesthood, never repair anything about it thoroughly, even its outside cover. Patch it up, nothing more. For instance, Jesuitism is a piece added to Catholicism. Treat edifices as you would treat institutions. Shadows should dwell in ruins. Worn-out

powers are uneasy in chambers freshly decorated. Ruined palaces accord best with institutions in rags. To attempt to describe the House of Lords of other days would be to attempt to describe the unknown. History is night. In history there is no second tier. That which is no longer on the stage immediately fades into obscurity. The scene is shifted, and all is at once forgotten. The past has a synonym, the unknown.

The peers of England sat as a court of justice in Westminster Hall, and as the higher legislative chamber specially reserved for the purpose, called *The House of Lords*.

Besides the house of peers of England, which did not assemble as a court, unless convoked by the crown, two great English tribunals, inferior to the house of peers, but superior to all other jurisdiction, sat in Westminster Hall. At the end of that hall they occupied adjoining compartments. The first was the Court of King's Bench, in which the king was supposed to preside; the second, the Court of Chancery, in which the Chancellor presided. The one was a court of justice, the other a court of mercy. It was the Chancellor who counselled the King to pardon; only rarely, though.

These two courts, which are still in existence, interpreted legislation, and reconstructed it somewhat, for the art of the judge is to carve the code into jurisprudence; a task from which equity results as it best may. Legislation was worked up and applied in the severity of the great hall of Westminster, the rafters of which were of chestnut wood, over which spiders could not spread their webs. There are enough of them in all conscience in the laws.

To sit as a court, and to sit as a chamber, are two distinct things. This double function constitutes supreme power. The Long Parliament, which began in November, 1640, felt the revolutionary necessity for this two-edged sword. So it declared that, as House of Lords, it possessed judicial as well as legislative power.

This double power has been, from time immemorial, vested in the House of Peers. We have just mentioned that as judges they occupied Westminster Hall; as legislators, they had another chamber. This other chamber, properly called the House of Lords, was oblong and narrow. All the light in it came from windows in deep embrasures,

which received their light through the roof, and a bull's-eye, composed of six panes with curtains over the throne. At night there was no other light than twelve half candelabra, fastened to the wall. The chamber of Venice was darker still. A certain obscurity is pleasing to those owls of supreme power.

A high ceiling adorned with many-faced relieves and gilded cornices, circled over the chamber where the Lords assembled. The Commons had but a flat ceiling. There is a meaning in all monarchical buildings. At one end of the long chamber of the Lords was the door; at the other opposite to it the throne. A few paces from the door, the bar, a transverse barrier, and a sort of frontier, marked the spot where the people ended, and the peerage began. To the right of the throne was a fireplace with emblazoned pinnacles, and two bas-reliefs of marble, representing, one, the victory of Cuthwulf over the Britons, in 572; the other, the geometrical plan of the borough of Dunstable, which had four streets, parallel to the four quarters of the world. The throne was approached by three steps. It was called the royal chair. On the two walls, opposite each other, were displayed in successive pictures, on a huge piece of tapestry given to the Lords by Elizabeth, the adventures of the Armada, from the time of its leaving Spain, until it was wrecked on the coasts of Great Britain. The great hulls of the ships were embroidered with threads of gold and silver, which had become blackened by time. Against this tapestry, cut at intervals by the candelabra fastened in the wall, were placed, to the right of the throne, three rows of benches for the bishops, and to the left three rows of benches for the dukes, marquises, and earls, in tiers, and separated by gangways. On the three benches of the first section sat the dukes; on those of the second, the marquises; on those of the third, the earls. The viscounts' bench was placed across, opposite the throne, and behind, between the viscounts and the bar, were two benches for the barons.

On the highest bench to the right of the throne sat the two archbishops of Canterbury and York; on the middle bench, three bishops, London, Durham, and Winchester, and the other bishops on the lowest bench. There is between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the other bishops this considerable difference, that he is bishop "by divine provi-

dence," whilst the others are only so "by divine permission." On the right of the throne was a chair for the Prince of Wales, and on the left, folding chairs for the royal dukes, and behind the latter, a raised seat for minor peers, who had not the privilege of voting. Plenty of fleurs-de-lys everywhere, and the great escutcheon of England over the four walls, above the peers as well as above the king.

The sons of peers and the heirs to peerages assisted at the debates, standing behind the throne, between the dais and the wall. A large square space was left vacant between the tiers of benches placed along three sides of the chamber and the throne. In this space which was covered with the state carpet, interwoven with the arms of Great Britain, were four woolsacks—one in front of the throne, on which sat the Lord Chancellor, between the mace and the seal; one in front of the bishops, on which sat the judges, counselors of state, who had the right to vote, but not to speak; one in front of the dukes, marquises, and earls, on which sat the Secretaries of State; and one in front of the viscounts and barons, on which sat the Clerk of the Crown and the Clerk of the Parliament, and on which the two under-clerks wrote, kneeling.

In the middle of the space was a large covered table, heaped with bundles of papers, registers, and summonses, with magnificent inkstands of chased silver, and with high candlesticks at the four corners.

The peers took their seats in chronological order, each according to the date of the creation of his peerage. They ranked according to their titles, and within their grade of nobility according to seniority. At the bar stood the Usher of the Black Rod, his wand in his hand. Inside the door was the Deputy-Usher; and outside, the Crier of the Black Rod, whose duty it was to open the sittings of the Courts of Justice, with the cry, "Oyez!" in French, uttered thrice, with a solemn accent upon the first syllable. Near the Crier stood the Sergeant Mace-Bearer of the Chancellor.

In royal ceremonies the temporal peers wore coronets on their heads, and the spiritual peers, mitres. The archbishops wore mitres, with a ducal coronet; and the bishops, who rank after viscounts, mitres, with a baron's cap.

It is to be remarked, as a coincidence at

once strange and instructive, that this square formed by the throne, the bishops, and the barons, with kneeling magistrates within it, was in form similar to the ancient parliament in France under the two first dynasties. The aspect of authority was the same in France as in England. Hincmar, in his treatise, "*De Ordinatione Sacri Palatii*," described in 853. the sittings of the House of Lords at Westminster in the eighteenth century. Strange, indeed! a description given nine hundred years before the existence of the thing described.

But what is history? An echo of the past in the future; a reflex from the future on the past.

The assembly of Parliament was obligatory only once in every seven years.

The Lords deliberated in secret, with closed doors. The debates of the Commons were public. Publicity entails diminution of dignity.

The number of the Lords was unlimited. To create lords was the menace of royalty; a means of government.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the House of Lords already contained a very large number of members. It has increased still further since that period. To dilute the aristocracy is politic. Elizabeth most probably erred in condensing the peerage into sixty-five lords. The less numerous the more intense is a peerage. In assemblies, the more numerous the members, the fewer the heads, James II. understood this when he increased the Upper House to a hundred and eighty-eight lords; a hundred and eighty-six if we subtract from the peerages the two duchies of royal favorites, Portsmouth and Cleveland. Under Anne the total number of the lords, including bishops, was two hundred and seven. Not counting the Duke of Cumberland, husband of the Queen, there were twenty-five dukes, of whom the premier, Norfolk, did not take his seat, being a Catholic; and of whom the junior, Cambridge, the Elector of Hanover, did, although a foreigner. Winchester, termed first and sole marquis of England—as Astorga was termed sole Marquis of Spain, was absent, being a Jacobite; so that there were only five marquises, of whom the premier was Lindsay, and the junior Lothian; seventy-nine earls, of whom Derby was premier, and Islay junior; nine viscounts, of whom Hereford was premier,

and Lonsdale junior; and sixty-two barons, of whom Abergavenny was premier, and Hervey, junior. Lord Hervey, the junior baron, was what was called the "*Puisné of the House*." Derby, of whom Oxford, Shrewsbury, and Kent took precedence, and who was therefore but the fourth under James II., became (under Anne) premier earl. Two chancellors' names had disappeared from the list of barons—Verulam, under which designation history finds us Bacon; and Wem, under which it finds us Jefferies. Bacon and Jefferies! both names overshadowed, though by different crimes. In 1705, the twenty-six bishops were reduced to twenty-five, the See of Chester being vacant. Amongst the bishops some were peers of high rank, such as William Talbot, Bishop of Oxford, who was head of the Protestant branch of that family. Others were eminent Doctors, like John Sharp, Archbishop of York, formerly Dean of Norwich; the poet, Thomas Spratt, Bishop of Rochester, an apoplectic old man; and that Bishop of Lincoln, who was to die Archbishop of Canterbury, Wake, the adversary of Bossuet. On important occasions, and when a message from the Crown to the House was expected, the whole of this august assembly—in robes, in wigs, in mitres, or plumes—formed out, and displayed their rows of heads, in tiers, along the walls of the House, where the storm was vaguely to be seen exterminating the Armada—almost as much as to say, "The storm is at the orders of England."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE OLD CHAMBER.

THE whole ceremony of the investiture of Gwynplaine, from his entry under the King's Gate to his taking the test under the nave window, was enacted in a sort of twilight.

Lord William Cowper had not permitted that he, as Lord Chancellor of England, should receive too many details of circumstances connected with the disfigurement of the young Lord Fermain Clancharlie, considering it below his dignity to know that a peer was not handsome; and feeling that his dignity would suffer if an inferior should venture to intrude on him information of such a nature. We know that a common fellow will take pleasure in saying: "that prince is

humpbacked;" therefore, it is abusive to say that a lord is deformed. To the few words dropped on the subject by the queen the Lord Chancellor had contented himself with replying,—

"The face of a peer is in his peerage!"

Ultimately, however, the affidavits he had read and certified enlightened him. Hence the precautions which he took. The face of the new lord, on his entrance into the house, might cause some sensation. This it was necessary to prevent; and the Lord Chancellor took his measures for the purpose. It is a fixed idea, and a rule of conduct in grave personages, to allow as little disturbance as possible. Dislike of incident is a part of their gravity. He felt the necessity of so ordering matters, that the admission of Gwynplaine should take place without any hitch, and like that of any other successor to the peerage.

It was for this reason that the Lord Chancellor directed that the reception of Lord Fermain Clancharlie should take place at the evening sitting. The Chancellor being the doorkeeper—" *Quodammodo ostiarus*," says the Norman charter; "*Januarum cancelorumque*," says Tertullian—he can officiate outside the room on the threshold; and Lord William Cowper had used his right by carrying out under the nave the formalities of the investiture of Lord Fermain Clancharlie. Moreover, he had brought forward the hour for the ceremonies; so that the new peer actually made his entrance into the house before the house had assembled.

For the investiture of a peer on the threshold, and not in the chamber itself, there were precedents. The first hereditary baron, John de Beauchamp, of Holt Castle, created by patent by Richard II., in 1387, Baron Kidderminster, was thus installed. In renewing this precedent the Lord Chancellor was creating for himself a future cause for embarrassment, of which he felt the inconvenience less than two years afterwards on the entrance of Viscount Newhaven into the House of Lords.

Short-sighted as we have already stated him to be, Lord William Cowper scarcely perceived the deformity of Gwynplaine; while the two sponsors, being old and nearly blind, did not perceive it at all.

The Lord Chancellor had chosen them for that very reason.

More than this, the Lord Chancellor, having only seen the presence and stature of Gwynplaine, thought him a fine-looking man. When the door-keeper opened the folding doors to Gwynplaine there were but few peers in the house; and these few were nearly all old men. In assemblies the old members are the most punctual; just as towards women they are the most assiduous.

On the duke's benches there were but two, one white-headed, the other gray: Thomas Osborne, Duke of Leeds, and Schomberg, son of that Schomberg, German by birth, French by his marshal's bâton, and English by his peerage, who was banished by the edict of Nantes, and who, having fought against England as a Frenchman, fought against France as an Englishman. On the benches of the lords spiritual there sat only the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of England, above; and below, Dr. Simon Patrick, Bishop of Ely, in conversation with Evelyn Pierrepont, Marquis of Dorchester, who was explaining to him the difference between a gabion considered singly and when used in the parapet of a field work, and between palisades and fraises; the former being a row of posts driven into the ground in front of the tents, for the purpose of protecting the camp; the latter sharp-pointed stakes set up under the wall of a fortress, to prevent the escalade of the besiegers and the desertion of the besieged; and the marquis was explaining further the method of placing fraises in the ditches of redoubts, half of each stake being buried and half exposed. Thomas Thynne, Viscount Weymouth, having approached the light of a chandelier, was examining a plan of his architect's for laying out his gardens at Longleat, in Wiltshire, in the Italian style,—as a lawn, broken up into plots, with squares of turf alternating with squares of red and yellow sand, of river shells, and of fine coal dust. On the viscounts' benches was a group of old peers, Essex, Ossulstone, Peregrine, Osborne, William Zulestein, Earl of Rochford, and amongst them, a few more youthful ones, of the faction which did not wear wigs, gathered round Prince Devereux, Viscount Hereford, and discussing the question whether an infusion of apalaca holly was tea. "Very nearly," said Osborne.—"Quite," said Essex. This discussion was attentively listened to by Paulet St. John, a cousin of Bolingbroke, of whom Voltaire was, later on,

in some degree the pupil; for Voltaire's education, commenced by Père Porée, was finished by Bolingbroke. On the marquises' benches, Thomas de Grey, Marquis of Kent, Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, was informing Robert Bertie, Marquis of Lindsay, Lord Chamberlain of England, that the first prize in the great English lottery of 1694, had been won by two French refugees, Monsieur Le Coq, formerly councillor in the parliament of Paris, and Monsieur Ravenel, a gentleman of Brittany. The Earl of Wemyss was reading a book, entitled "*Pratique Curieuse des Oracles des Sybilles*." John Campbell, Earl of Greenwich, famous for his long chin, his gayety, and his eighty-seven years, was writing to his mistress. Lord Chandos was trimming his nails.

The sitting which was about to take place, being a royal one, where the crown was to be represented by commissioners, two assistant door-keepers were placing in front of the throne a bench covered with purple velvet. On the second woolsack sat the Master of the Rolls, *sacrorum scriniorum magister*, who had then for his residence the house formerly belonging to the converted Jews. Two under-clerks were kneeling, and turning over the leaves of the registers which lay on the fourth woolsack. In the meantime the Lord Chancellor took his place on the first woolsack. The members of the chamber took theirs, some sitting, others standing; when the Archbishop of Canterbury rose and read the prayer, and the sitting of the house began.

Gwynplaine had already been there for some time without attracting any notice. The second bench of barons, on which was his place, was close to the bar, so that he had had to take but a few steps to reach it. The two peers, his sponsors, sat, one on his right, the other on his left; thus almost concealing the presence of the new-comer.

No one having been furnished with any previous information, the Clerk of the Parliament had read in a low voice, and, as it were, mumbled through the different documents concerning the new peer, and the Lord Chancellor had proclaimed his admission in the midst of what is called, in the reports, "general inattention." Every one was talking. There buzzed through the House that cheerful hum of voices during which assemblies pass things which will not bear the

light, and at which they wonder when they find out what they have done, too late.

Gwynplaine was seated in silence, with his head uncovered, between the two old peers, Lord Fitzwalter and Lord Arundel. On entering, according to the instructions of the King-at-arms—afterwards renewed by his sponsors—he had bowed to the throne.

Thus all was over. He was a peer. That pinnacle, under the glory of which he had, all his life, seen his master, Ursus, bow himself down in fear—that prodigious pinnacle was under his feet. He was in that place, so dark and yet so dazzling in England. Old peak of the feudal mountain, looked up to for six centuries by Europe and by history! Terrible nimbus of a world of shadow! He had entered into the brightness of its glory, and his entrance was irrevocable.

He was there in his own sphere, seated on his throne, like the king on his. He was there and nothing in the future could obliterate the fact. The royal crown, which he saw under the dais, was brother to his coronet. He was a peer of that throne. In the face of majesty he was peerage; less, but like. Yesterday, what was he? A player. To-day, what was he? A prince.

Yesterday nothing; to-day, everything.

It was a sudden confrontation of misery and power, meeting face to face, and resolving themselves at once into two halves of a conscience. Two spectres, Adversity, and Prosperity, were taking possession of the same soul, and each drawing that soul towards itself.

Oh, pathetic division of an intellect, of a will, of a brain, between two brothers who are enemies! the Phantom of Poverty and the Phantom of Wealth! Abel and Cain in the same man!

## CHAPTER V.

### ARISTOCRATIC GOSSIP.

BY degrees the seats of the House filled as the lords arrived. The question was the vote for augmenting, by a hundred thousand pounds sterling, the annual income of George of Denmark, Duke of Cumberland, the queen's husband. Besides this, it was announced that several bills assented to by her majesty were to be brought back to the House by the Commissioners of the Crown

empowered and charged to sanction them. This raised the sitting to a royal one. The peers all wore their robes over their usual court or ordinary dress. These robes, similar to that which had been thrown over Gwynplaine, were alike for all, excepting that the dukes had five bands of ermine, trimmed with gold; marquises four; earls and viscounts, three; and barons two. Most of the lords entered in groups. They had met in the corridors, and were continuing the conversation there begun. A few came in alone. The costumes of all were solemn; but neither their attitudes nor their words corresponded with them. On entering, each one bowed to the throne.

The peers flowed in. The series of great names marched past with scant ceremonial, the public not being present. Leicester entered, and shook Lichfield's hand; then came Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough and Monmouth, the friend of Locke, under whose advice he had proposed the recoinage of money; then Charles Campbell, Earl of Loudoun, listening to Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke; then Lorme, Earl of Carnarvon; then Robert Sutton, Baron Lexington, son of that Lexington who recommended Charles II. to banish Gregorio Leti, the historiographer, who was so ill-advised as to try to become an historian; then Thomas Bellasys, Viscount Falconberg, a handsome old man; and the three cousins, Howard, Earl of Bindon, Bowes Howard, Earl of Berkshire, and Stafford Howard, Earl of Stafford—all together; then John Lovelace, Baron Lovelace, which peerage became extinct in 1736, so that Richardson was able to introduce Lovelace in his book, and to create a type under the name. All these personages—celebrated each in his own way, either in politics or in war, and of whom many were an honor to England—were laughing and talking.

It was history, as it were, seen in undress.

In less than half-an-hour the House was nearly full. This was to be expected, as the sitting was a royal one. What was more unusual was the eagerness of the conversations. The House, so sleepy not long before, now hummed like a hive of bees.

The arrival of the peers who had come in late had woke them up. These lords had brought news. It was strange that the peers who had been there at the opening of the sitting knew nothing of what had occurred,

while those who had not been there knew all about it. Several lords had come from Windsor.

For some hours past the adventures of Gwynplaine had been the subject of conversation. A secret is a net; let one mesh drop and the whole goes to pieces. In the morning, in consequence of the incidents related above, the whole story of a peer found on the stage, and of a mountebank become a lord, had burst forth at Windsor in Royal places. The princess had talked about it, and then the lackeys. From the Court the news soon reached the town. Events have a weight, and the mathematical rule of velocity, increasing in proportion to the squares of the distance, applies to them. They fall upon the public, and work themselves through it with the most astounding rapidity. At seven o'clock no one in London had caught wind of the story. By eight, Gwynplaine was the talk of the town. Only the lords who had been so punctual that they were present before the assembling of the House were ignorant of the circumstances, not having been in the town when the matter was talked of by everyone, and having been in the House, where nothing had been perceived. Seated quietly on their benches, they were addressed by the eager newcomers.

"Well!" said Francis Brown, Viscount Montacute, to the Marquis of Dorchester.

"What?"

"Is it possible?"

"What?"

"The Laughing Man!"

"Who is the Laughing Man?"

"Don't you know the Laughing Man?"

"No."

"He is a clown, a fellow performing at fairs. He has an extraordinary face, which people gave a penny to look at. A mountebank."

"Well what then?"

"You have just installed him as a peer of England."

"You are the laughing man, my Lord Montacute!"

"I am not laughing, my Lord Dorchester."

Lord Montacute made a sign to the Clerk of the Parliament, who rose from his wool-sack, and confirmed to their lordships the fact of the admission of the new peer. Besides, he detailed the circumstances.



"How wonderful!" said Lord Dorchester. "I was talking to the Bishop of Ely all the while."

The young Earl of Annesley addressed old Lord Eure, who had but two years more to live, as he died in 1707.

"My Lord Eure."

"My Lord Annesley."

"Did you know Lord Linnæus Clancharlie?"

"A man of by-gone days. Yes, I did."

"He died in Switzerland?"

"Yes; we were relations."

"He was a republican under Cromwell, and remained a republican under Charles II.?"

"A republican? Not at all! He was sulking. He had a personal quarrel with the king. I know from good authority that Lord Clancharlie would have returned to his allegiance, if they had given him the office of Chancellor, which Lord Hyde held."

"You astonish me, Lord Eure. I had heard that Lord Clancharlie was an honest politician."

"An honest politician! does such a thing exist? Young man, there is no such thing."

"And Cato?"

"Oh, you believe in Cato, do you?"

"And Aristides?"

"They did well to exile him."

"And Thomas More?"

"They did well to cut off his head."

"And in your opinion, Lord Clancharlie was a man as you describe. As for a man remaining in exile, why it is simply ridiculous."

"He died there."

"An ambitious man disappointed?"

"You ask if I knew him? I should think so indeed. I was his nearest friend."

"Do you know, Lord Eure, that he married when in Switzerland?"

"I am pretty sure of it."

"And that he had a lawful heir by that marriage?"

"Yes; who is dead."

"Who is living?"

"Living?"

"Living."

"Impossible!"

"It is a fact—proved, authenticated, confirmed, registered."

"Then that son will inherit the Clancharlie peerage?"

"He is not going to inherit it."

"Why?"

"Because he has inherited it. It is done."

"Done?"

"Turn your head, Lord Eure; he is sitting behind you, on the barons' benches."

Lord Eure turned, but Gwynplaine's face was concealed under his forest of hair.

"So," said the old man, who could see nothing but his hair, "he has already adopted the new fashion. He does not wear a wig."

Grantham accosted Colepepper.

"Some one is finely sold."

"Who is that?"

"David Dirry-Moir."

"How is that?"

"He is no longer a peer."

"How can that be?"

And Henry Auverquerque, Earl of Grantham, told John Baron Colepepper the whole anecdote—how the waif-flask had been carried to the Admiralty, about the parchment of the Comprachicos, the *Jussu regis*, counter-signed *Jefferies*, and the confrontation in the torture-cell at Southwark, the proof of all the facts acknowledged by the Lord Chancellor and by the Queen; the taking the test under the nave, and finally, the admission of Lord Fermain Clancharlie at the commencement of the sitting. Both the lords endeavored to distinguish his face as he sat between Lord Fitzwalter and Lord Arundel, but with no better success than Lord Eure and Lord Annesley.

Gwynplaine, either by chance or by the arrangement of his sponsors, forewarned by the Lord Chancellor, was so placed in shadow as to escape their curiosity.

"Who is it? Where is he?"

Such was the exclamation of all the newcomers, but no one succeeded in making him out distinctly. Some, who had seen Gwynplaine in the Green Box, were exceedingly curious, but lost their labor; as it sometimes happens that a young lady is entrenched within a troop of dowagers, Gwynplaine was, as it were, enveloped in several layers of lords, old, infirm, and indifferent. Good liveries, with the gout, are marvellously indifferent to stories about their neighbors.

There passed, from hand to hand, copies of a letter, three lines in length, written, it was said, by the Duchess Josiana to the Queen, her sister, in answer to the injunction made by her Majesty, that she should espouse the

new peer, the lawful heir of the Clancharlies, Lord Fermain. This letter was couched in the following terms:—

“MADAM,—The arrangement will suit me just as well. I can have Lord David for my lover.—(Signéd,) JOSIANA.”

This note, whether a true copy or a forgery, was received by all with the greatest enthusiasm. A young lord, Charles Okehampton, Baron Mohun, who belonged to the wigless faction, read and re-read it with delight. Lewis de Duras, Earl of Faversham, an Englishman with a Frenchman's wit, looked at Mohun and smiled.

“That is a woman I should like to marry!” exclaimed Lord Mohun.

The lords around them overheard the following dialogue between Duras and Mohun.

“Marry the Duchess Josiana, Lord Mohun!”

“Why not?”

“Plague take it.”

“She would make one very happy!”

“She would make many very happy.”

“But is it not always a question of many?”

“Lord Mohun, you are right. With regard to women, we have always the leavings of others. Has any one ever had a beginning?”

“Adam, perhaps.”

“Not he.”

“Then Satan.”

“My dear lord,” concluded Lewis de Duras, “Adam only lent his name. Poor dupe! He endorsed the human race. Man was begotten on the woman by the devil.”

Hugh Cholmondeley, Earl of Cholmondeley, strong in points of law, was asked from the bishops' benches by Nathaniel Crew, who was doubly a peer, being a temporal peer, as Baron Crew, and a spiritual peer, as Bishop of Durham.

“Is it possible?” said Crew.

“Is it regular?” said Cholmondeley.

“The investiture of this peer was made outside the House,” replied the Bishop; “but it is stated that there are precedents for it.”

“Yes. Lord Beauchamp, under Richard II.; Lord Chenay, under Elizabeth; and Lord Broghill, under Cromwell.”

“Cromwell goes for nothing.”

“What do you think of it all?”

“Many different things.”

“My Lord Chonmondeley, what will be the rank of this young Lord Clancharlie in the House?”

“My Lord Bishop, the interruption of the

Republic having displaced ancient rights of precedence, Clancharlie now ranks in the peerage between Barnard and Somers, so that should each be called upon to speak in turn, Lord Clancharlie would be the eighth in rotation.”

“Really! he, a mountebank from a public show!”

“The act, *per se*, does not astonish me, my Lord Bishop. We meet with such things. Still more wonderful circumstances occur! Was not the War of the Roses predicted by the sudden drying up of the river Ouse, in Bedfordshire, on January 1st, 1399. Now, if a river dries up, a peer may, quite as naturally fall into a servile condition. Ulysses, King of Ithaca, played all kinds of different parts. Fermain Clancharlie remained a lord under his player's garb. Sordid garments touch not the soul's nobility. But taking the test and the investiture outside the sitting, though strictly legal, might give rise to objections. I am of opinion that it will be necessary to look into the matter, to see if there be any ground to question the Lord Chancellor in Privy Council, later on. We shall see in a week or two what is best to be done.”

And the Bishop added,—

“All the same. It is an adventure such as has not occurred since Earl Gesbodus's time.”

Gwynplaine, the Laughing Man; the Tadcaster Inn; the Green Box; “Chaos Vanquished;” Switzerland; Chillon; the Comprachicos; exile; mutilation; the Republic; Jefferies; James II.; the *jussu regis*; the bottle opened at the Admiralty; the father, Lord Linnæus; the legitimate son, Lord Fermain; the bastard son, Lord David; the probable law suits; the Duchess Josiana; the Lord Chancellor; the Queen;—all these subjects of conversation ran from bench to bench.

Whispering is like a train of gunpowder.

They seized on every incident. All the details of the occurrence caused an immense murmur through the House. Gwynplaine, wandering in the depths of his reverie, heard the buzzing, without knowing that he was the cause of it. He was strangely attentive to the depths, not to the surface. Excess of attention becomes isolation.

The buzz of conversation in the House impedes its usual business no more than the

dust raised by a troop impedes its march. The judges—who in the Upper House were mere assistants, without the privilege of speaking, except when questioned—had taken their places on the second woolsack; and the three Secretaries of State theirs on the third.

The heirs to peerages flowed into their compartment, at once without and within the House, at the back of the throne.

The peers in their minority were on their own benches. In 1705 the number of these little lords amounted to no less than a dozen—Huntingdon, Lincoln, Dorset, Warwick, Bath, Barlington, Derwentwater,—destined to a tragical death,—Longueville, Lonsdale, Dudley, Ward, and Carterel: a troop of brats made up of eight earls, two viscounts, and two barons.

In the centre, on the three stages of benches, each lord had taken his seat. Almost all the bishops were there. The dukes mustered strong, beginning with Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset; and ending with George Augustus, Elector of Hanover, and Duke of Cambridge, junior in date of creation, and consequently junior in rank. All were in order, according to right of precedence: Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, whose grandfather had sheltered Hobbes, at Hardwicke, when he was ninety-two; Lennox, Duke of Richmond; the three Fitzroys, the Duke of Southampton, the Duke of Grafton, and the Duke of Northumberland; Butler, Duke of Ormond; Somerset, Duke of Beaufort; Beauchamp, Duke of Saint Albans; Paulet, Duke of Bolton; Osborne, Duke of Leeds; Wrottesley Russell, Duke of Bedford, whose motto and device was *che sara sara*, which expresses a determination to take things as they come; Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham; Manners, Duke of Rutland; and others. Neither Howard, Duke of Norfolk, nor Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury, were present, being Catholics; nor Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, the French Malbrouck, who was at that time fighting the French and beating them. There were no Scotch dukes then—Queensberry, Montrose, and Roxburgh not being admitted till 1707.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE HIGH AND THE LOW.

ALL at once a bright light broke upon the House. Four door-keepers brought and

placed on each side of the throne four high candelabra filled with wax-lights. The throne, thus illuminated, shone in a kind of purple light. It was empty, but august. The presence of the queen herself could not have added much majesty to it.

The Usher of the Black Rod entered with his wand, and announced,—

“The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty.”

The hum of conversation immediately subsided.

A clerk, in a wig and gown, appeared at the great door, holding a cushion worked with *fleurs-de-lys*, on which lay parchment documents. These documents were bills. From each hung the *bille* or *bulle*, by a silken string, from which laws are called bills in England, and bulls at Rome. Behind the clerk walked three men in peers' robes, and wearing plumed hats.

These were the Royal Commissioners. The first was the Lord High Treasurer of England, Godolphin; the second, the Lord President of the Council, Pembroke; the third, the Lord of the Privy Seal, Newcastle.

They walked one by one, according to precedence, not of their rank, but of their commission—Godolphin first, Newcastle last, although a duke.

They reached the bench in front of the throne, to which they bowed, took off and replaced their hats, and sat down on the bench.

The Lord Chancellor turned towards the Usher of the Black Rod, and said,—

“Order the Commons to the bar of the House.”

The Usher of the Black Rod retired.

The clerk, who was one of the clerks of the House of Lords, placed on the table, between the four woolsacks, the cushion on which lay the bills.

Then there came an interruption, which continued for some minutes.

Two doorkeepers placed before the bar a stool, with three steps.

This stool was covered with crimson velvet, on which *fleurs-de-lys* were designed in gilt nails.

The great door, which had been closed, was reopened; and a voice announced,—

“The faithful Commons of England.”

It was the Usher of the Black Rod announcing the other half of Parliament.

The lords put on their hats.

The members of the house of Commons entered, preceded by their Speaker, all with uncovered heads.

They stopped at the bar. They were in their ordinary garb; for the most part dressed in black, and wearing swords.

The Speaker, the Right Honorable John Smith, an esquire, member for the borough of Andover, got up on the stool which was at the centre of the bar. The Speaker of the Commons wore a robe of black satin, with large hanging sleeves, embroidered before and behind with brandenburgs of gold, and a wig smaller than that of the Lord Chancellor. He was majestic, but inferior.

The Commons, both Speaker and member, stood waiting, with uncovered head, before the peers, who were seated, with their hats on.

Amongst the members of Commons might have been remarked the Chief Justice of Chester, Joseph Jekyll; the Queen's three Serjeants-at-Law—Hooper, Powys, and Parker; James Montagu, Solicitor-General; and the Attorney-General, Simon Harcourt. With the exception of a few baronets and knights, and nine Lords by courtesy—Hartington, Windsor, Woodstock, Mordaunt, Granby, Scudamore, Fitzhardinge, Hyde, and Berkeley—sons of peers and heirs to peerages—all were of the people—a sort of gloomy and silent crowd.

When the noise made by the trampling of feet had ceased, the Crier of the Black Rod, standing by the door exclaimed:—

“Oyez!”

The Clerk of the Crown arose. He took, unfolded, and read the first of the documents on the cushion. It was a message from the Queen, naming three commissioners to represent her in Parliament with power to sanction the bills.

“To wit——”

Here the Clerk raised his voice.

“Sidney Earl of Godolphin.”

The Clerk bowed to Lord Godolphin. Lord Godolphin raised his hat.

The Clerk continued,—

“Thomas Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery.”

The Clerk bowed to Lord Pembroke. Lord Pembroke touched his hat.

The Clerk resumed,—

“John Holles, Duke of Newcastle.”

The Duke of Newcastle nodded.

The Clerk of the Crown resumed his seat.

The Clerk of the Parliaments arose. His under-clerk, who had been on his knees behind him, got up also. Both turned their faces to the throne, and their backs to the Commons.

There were five bills on the cushion. These five bills, voted by the Commons and agreed to by the Lords, awaited the royal sanction.

The Clerk of the Parliaments read the first bill.

It was a bill passed by the Commons, charging the county with the costs of the improvements made by the Queen to her residence at Hampton Court, amounting to a million sterling.

The reading over, the Clerk bowed low to the throne. The under-clerk bowed lower still; then, half turning his head towards the Commons, he said,—

“The Queen accepts your bounty—*et ainsi le veut.*”

The Clerk read the second bill.

It was a law condemning to imprisonment and fine whomsoever withdrew himself from the service of the trainbands. The trainbands were a militia, recruited from the middle and lower classes, serving gratis, which in Elizabeth's reign furnished, on the approach of the Armada, one hundred and eighty-five thousand foot-soldiers and forty-thousand horse.

The two clerks made a fresh bow to the throne, after which, the under-clerk, again half turning his face to the Commons said,—  
“*La Reine le veut.*”

The third bill was for increasing the tithes and prebends of the Bishopric of Lichfield and Coventry, which was one of the richest in England; for making an increased yearly allowance to the cathedral, for augmenting the number of its canons, and for increasing its deaneries and benefices, “to the benefit of our holy religion,” as the preamble set forth. The fourth bill added to the budget fresh taxes: one on marbled paper; one on hackney coaches, fixed at the number of eight hundred in London, and taxed at a sum equal to fifty-two francs yearly each; one on barristers, attorneys, and solicitors, at forty-eight francs a year a head; one on tanned skins, notwithstanding, said the preamble, the complaints of the workers in leather. One on soap, notwithstanding the petitions of the City of Exeter and the whole of Devonshire, where

great quantities of cloth and serge were manufactured; one on wine at four shillings; one on flour; one on barley and hops; and one renewing for four years—"the necessities of the State," said the preamble, "requiring to be attended to before the remonstrances of commerce"—tounage dues, varying from six francs per ton, for ships coming from the westward, to eighteen francs on those coming from the eastward. Finally, the bill, declaring the sums already levied for the current year insufficient, concluded by decreeing a poll-tax on each subject throughout the kingdom of four shillings per head, adding that a double tax would be levied on every one who did not take the fresh oath to Government. The fifth bill forbade the admission into the hospital of any sick person who on entering did not deposit a pound sterling to pay for his funeral, in case of death. These last three bills, like the first two, were one after the other sanctioned and made law by a bow to the throne, and the four words pronounced by the under-clerk, "*la Reine le veut*," spoken over his shoulder to the Commons. Then the under-clerk knelt down again before the fourth woosack, and the Lord Chancellor said,—

"*Soit fait comme il est désiré.*"

This terminated the royal sitting. The Speaker, bent double before the Chancellor, descended from the stool, backwards, lifting up his robe behind him; the members of the House of Commons bowed to the ground, and as the Upper House resumed the business of the day, heedless of all these marks of respect, the Commons departed.

## CHAPTER VII.

STORMS OF MEN ARE WORSE THAN STORMS OF OCEANS.

THE doors were closed again, the Usher of the Black Rod re-entered; the Lords Commissioners left the bench of State, took their places at the top of the dukes' benches, by right of their commission, and the Lord Chancellor addressed the House.

"My Lords, the House having deliberated for several days on the Bill which proposes to augment by 100,000*l.* sterling the annual provision for his royal Highness the Prince, her Majesty's Consort, and the debate having been exhausted and closed, the House will

proceed to vote; the votes will be taken according to custom, beginning with the puisne Baron. Each Lord, on his name being called will rise and answer *content*, or *non-content*, and will be at liberty to explain the motive of his vote, if he thinks fit to do so. Clerk take the vote."

The Clerk of the House, standing up, opened a large folio, and spread it open on a gilded desk. This book was the list of the Peerage.

The puisne of the House Lords at that time was John Hervey, created Baron and Peer in 1703, from whom is descended the Marquis of Bristol.

The Clerk called.

"My Lord John, Baron Hervey."

An old man in a fair wig rose, and said, "Content."

Then he sat down.

The Clerk registered his vote.

The Clerk continued,

"My Lord Francis Seymour, Baron Conway, of Killultagh."

"Content," murmured, half rising, an elegant young man, with a face like a page, who little thought that he was to be ancestor to the Marquises of Hertford.

"My Lord John Leveson, Baron Gower," continued the Clerk.

This Baron, from whom were to spring the Dukes of Sutherland, rose, and, as he re-seated himself, said, "Content."

The Clerk went on,

"My Lord Heneage Finch, Baron Guernsey."

The ancestor of the Earls of Aylesford, neither older nor less elegant than the ancestor of the Marquises of Hertford, justified his device *aperto vivere voto*, by the proud tone in which he exclaimed, "Content."

Whilst he was resuming his seat, the Clerk called the fifth Baron,

"My Lord John, Baron Granville."

Rising and resuming his seat quickly, "Content," exclaimed Lord Granville, of Potteridge, whose peerage was to become extinct in 1709.

The Clerk passed to the sixth.

"My Lord Charles Montague, Baron Halifax."

"Content," said Lord Halifax, the bearer of a title which had become extinct in the Saville family, and was destined to become extinct again in that of Montague. Montagu

is distinct from Montagu and Montacute. And Lord Halifax added, "Prince George has an allowance as Her Majesty's Consort; he has another as Prince of Denmark; another as Duke of Cumberland; another as Lord High Admiral of England and Ireland; but he has not one as Commander-in-Chief. This is an injustice and a wrong which must beset right, in the interest of the English people."

Then Lord Halifax passed an eulogium on the Christian religion, abused popery, and voted the subsidy.

Lord Halifax sat down, and the Clerk resumed.

"My Lord Christopher, Baron Barnard."

Lord Barnard, from whom were to descend the Dukes of Cleveland, rose to answer to his name.

"Content."

He took some time in reseating himself, for he wore a lace band which was worth showing. For all that, Lord Barnard was a worthy gentleman and a brave officer.

While Lord Barnard was resuming his seat, the Clerk, who read by routine, hesitated for an instant; he readjusted his spectacles, and leaned over the register with renewed attention; then, lifting up his head, he said,

"My Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville."

Gwynplaine arose.

"Non-content," said he.

Every face was turned towards him. Gwynplaine remained standing. The branches of candles, placed on each side of the throne, lighted up his features, and marked them against the darkness of the august chamber in the relief with which a mask might show against a background of smoke.

Gwynplaine had made that effort over himself which, it may be remembered, was possible to him in extremity. By a concentration of will equal to that which would be needed to cow a tiger, he had succeeded in obliterating for a moment the fatal grin upon his face. For an instant he no longer laughed. This effort could not last long. Rebellion against that which is our law or our fatality, must be short lived; at times, the waters of the sea resist the power of gravitation, swell into a waterspout and become a mountain, but only on the condition of falling back again.

Such a struggle was Gwynplaine's. For

an instant, which he felt to be a solemn one, by a prodigious intensity of will, but for not much longer than a flash of lightning lasts, he had thrown over his brow the dark veil of his soul—he held in suspense his incurable laugh. From that face upon which it had been carved, he had withdrawn the joy. Now it was nothing but terrible.

"Who is this man?" exclaimed all.

That forest of hair; those dark hollows under the brows; the deep gaze of eyes which they could not see; that head, on the wild outlines of which light and darkness mingled weirdly; were a wonder, indeed. It was beyond all understanding; much as they had heard of him, the sight of Gwynplaine was a terror. Even those who expected much found their expectations surpassed. It was as though on the mountain reserved for the gods, during the banquet on a serene evening, the whole of the all-powerful body being gathered together, the face of Prometheus, mangled by the vulture's beak, should have suddenly appeared before them, like a blood-colored moon on the horizon. Olympus looking on Caucasus! What a vision! Old and young, open-mouthed with surprise, fixed their eyes on Gwynplaine.

An old man, respected by the whole House, who had seen many men and many things, and who was intended for a dukedom,—Thomas, Earl of Wharton—rose in terror.

"What does all this mean?" he cried. "Who has brought this man into the House? Let him be put out."

And addressing Gwynplaine, haughtily,—

"Who are you? Whence do you come?"

Gwynplaine answered,—

"Out of the depths."

And, folding his arms, he looked at the lords.

"Who am I? I am wretchedness. My lords, I have a word to say to you."

A shudder ran through the House. Then all was silence. Gwynplaine continued—

"My lords, you are highly placed. It is well. We must believe that God has his reasons that it should be so. You have power, opulence, pleasure, the sun ever shining in your zenith; authority unbounded, enjoyment without a sting, and a total forgetfulness of others. So be it. But there is something below you—above you, it may be. My lords, I bring you news; news of the existence of mankind."

Assemblies are like children. A strange occurrence is a Jack-in-the-box to them. It frightens them; but they like it. It is as if a spring were touched, and a devil jumps up. Mirabeau, who was also deformed, was a case in point in France.

Gwynplaine felt within himself, at that moment, a strange elevation. In addressing a body of men, one's foot seems to rest on them; to rest, as it were, on a pinnacle of souls—on human hearts, that quiver under one's heel. Gwynplaine was no longer the man who had been, only the night before, almost mean. The fumes of the sudden elevation which had disturbed him, had cleared off and become transparent, and in the state in which Gwynplaine had been seduced by a vanity, he now saw but a duty. That which had at first lessened, now elevated, him. He was illuminated by one of those great flashes which emanate from duty.

All round Gwynplaine arose cries of "Hear, hear!"

Meanwhile, rigid and superhuman, he succeeded in maintaining on his features that severe and sad contraction under which the laugh was fretting like a wild horse struggling to escape.

He resumed.

"I am he who cometh out of the depths. My lords, you are great and rich. There lies your danger. You profit by the night; but beware! The Dawn is all-powerful. You cannot prevail over it. It is coming. Nay! it is come. Within it is the day-spring of irresistible light. And who shall hinder that sling from hurling the sun into the sky? The sun I speak of is Right. You are Privilege. Tremble! The real master of the house is about to knock at the door. What is the father of Privilege? Chance. What is his son? Abuse. Neither Chance nor Abuse are abiding. For both a dark morrow is at hand! I am come to warn you. I am come to impeach your happiness. It is fashioned out of the misery of your neighbor. You have everything, and that everything is composed of the nothing of others. My lords, I am an advocate without hope, pleading a cause that is lost; but that cause God will gain on appeal. As for me, I am but a voice, Mankind is a mouth, of which I am the cry. You shall hear me! I am about to open before you, peers of England, the great assize of the people; of that sovereign who is

the subject; of that criminal who is the judge. I am weighed down under the load of all that I have to say. Where am I to begin? I know not, I have gathered together, in the vast diffusion of suffering, my innumerable and scattered pleas. What am I to do with them now? They overwhelm me, and I must cast them to you in a confused mass. Did I foresee this? No. You are astonished, So am I. Yesterday I was a mountebank. To-day I am a peer. Deep play! Of whom? Of the Unknown. Let us all tremble. My lords, all the blue sky is for you. Of this immense universe you see but the sunshine. Believe me, it has its shadows. Amongst you I am called Lord Fermain Clancharlie; but my true name is one of poverty—Gwynplaine. I am a wretched thing carved out of the stuff of which the great are made, for such was the pleasure of a king. That is my history. Many amongst you knew my father. I knew him not. His connection with you was his feudal descent; his outlawry is the bond between him and me. What God willed was well. I was cast into the abyss. For what end? To search its depths. I am a diver, and I have brought back the pearl, truth. I speak, because I know. You shall hear me, my lords, I have seen, I have felt! Suffering is not a mere word, ye happy ones! Poverty I grew up in; winter has frozen me; hunger I have tasted; contempt I have suffered; pestilence I have undergone; shame I have drunk of. And I will vomit all these up before you, and this ejection of all misery shall sully your feet and flame about them. I hesitated before I allowed myself to be brought to the place where I now stand, because I have duties to others elsewhere, and my heart is not here. What passed within me has nothing to do with you. When the man, whom you call Usher of the Black Rod, came to seek me by order of the woman whom you call the Queen, the idea struck me for a moment that I would refuse to come. But it seemed to me that the hidden hand of God pressed me to the spot, and I obeyed. I felt that I must come amongst you. Why? Because of my rags of yesterday. It is to raise my voice among those who have eaten their fill that God mixed me up with the famished. Oh, have pity! Of this fatal world to which you believe yourselves to belong, you know nothing. Placed so high, you are out of it. But I will tell

you what it is; I have had experience enough. I come from beneath the pressure of your feet. I can tell you your weight. Oh, you who are masters, do you know what you are? do you see what you are doing? No. Oh, it is dreadful. One night, one night of storm, a little deserted child, an orphan alone in the immeasurable creation, I made my entrance into that darkness which you call society. The first thing that I saw was the law, under the form of a gibbet; the second was riches, your riches, under the form of a woman dead of cold and hunger; the third, the future, under the form of a child left to die; the fourth, goodness, truth, and justice, under the figure of a vagabond, whose sole friend and companion was a wolf."

Just then, Gwynplaine, stricken by a sudden emotion, felt the sobs rising in his throat, causing him most unfortunately to burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

The contagion was immediate. A cloud had hung over the assembly. It might have broken into terror; it broke into delight. Mad merriment seized the whole House. Nothing pleases the great chambers of sovereign man so much as buffoonery. It is their revenge upon their graver moments.

The laughter of kings is like the laughter of the gods. There is always a cruel point in it. The lords set to play. Sneers gave sting to their laughter. They clapped their hands around the speaker, and insulted him. A volley of merry exclamations assailed him like bright, but wounding hailstones.

"Bravo, Gwynplaine!"—"Bravo, Laughing Man!"—"Bravo, Snout of the Green Box!"—"Mask of Tarrinzeau Field!"—"You are going to give us a performance."—"That's right; talk away!"—"There's a funny fellow!"—"How the beast does laugh, to be sure!"—"Good day, pantaloons!"—"How d'ye do, my lord clown!"—"Go on with your speech!"—"That fellow a peer of England?"—"Go on!"—"No, no!"—"Yes, yes!"

The Lord Chancellor was much disturbed.

A deaf peer, James Butler, Duke of Ormond, placing his hand to his ear like an ear trumpet, asked Charles Beauclerk, Duke of St. Albans,—

"How has he voted?"

"Non-content."

"By heavens!" said Ormond, "I can understand it, with such a face as his."

Do you think that you can ever recapture

a crowd once it has escaped your grasp? And all assemblies are crowds alike. No, eloquence is a bit; if the bit breaks, the audience runs away and rushes on till it has thrown the orator. Hearers naturally dislike the speaker, which is a fact not as clearly understood as it ought to be. Instinctively he pulls the reins, but that is a useless expedient. However, all orators try it, as Gwynplaine did.

He looked for a moment at those men who were laughing at him. Then he cried,—

"So, you insult misery! Silence, Peers of England! Judges, listen to my pleading! Oh! I conjure you, have pity. Pity for whom? Pity for yourselves. Who is in danger? Yourselves! Do you not see that you are in a balance, and that there is in one scale your power, and in the other your responsibility? It is God who is weighing you. Oh, do not laugh. Think. The trembling of your consciences is the oscillation of the balance in which God is weighing your actions. You are not wicked; you are like other men, neither better nor worse. You believe yourselves to be gods, but be ill tomorrow, and see your divinity shivering in fever! We are worth one as much as the other. I address myself to honest men; there are such here. I address myself to lofty intellects; there are such here. I address myself to generous souls; there are such here. You are fathers, sons, and brothers; therefore you are often touched. He amongst you who has this morning watched the awaking of his little child, is a good man. Hearts are all alike. Humanity is nothing but a heart. Between those who oppress and those who are oppressed, there is but a difference of place. Your feet tread on the heads of men. The fault is not yours; it is that of the social Babel. The building is faulty, and out of the perpendicular. One floor bears down the other. Listen, and I will tell you what to do. Oh! as you are powerful, be brotherly. As you are great, be tender. If you only knew what I have seen! Alas! what gloom is there beneath! The people are in a dungeon. How many are condemned who are innocent! No daylight, no air, no virtue! They are without hope, and yet—there is the danger! they expect something. Realize all this misery. There are beings who live in death. There are little girls who at twelve begin by prostitution, and who end in old age at twenty. As



to the severities of the criminal code, they are fearful. I speak somewhat at random, and do not pick my words. I say everything that comes into my head. No later than yesterday, I, who stand here, saw a man lying in chains, naked, with stones piled on his chest, expire in torture. Do you know of these things? No. If you knew what goes on, you would not dare to be happy. Who of you have been to Newcastle-upon-Tyne? There, in the mines, are men who chew coals to fill their stomachs and deceive hunger. Look here! in Lancashire, Ribblesdale has sunk, by poverty, from a town to a village. I do not see that Prince George of Denmark requires a hundred thousand pounds extra. I should prefer receiving a poor sick man into the hospital, without compelling him to pay his funeral expenses in advance. In Caernarvon, and at Strathmore, as well as at Strathbickan, the exhaustion of the poor is horrible. At Stratford, they cannot drain the marsh, for want of money. The manufactories are shut up all over Lancashire. There is forced idleness everywhere. Do you know that the herring fishers at Harlech eat grass when the fishery fails? Do you know that at Burton-Lazars there are still lepers confined, on whom they fire if they leave their tan houses? At Ailesbury, a town of which one of you is lord, destitution is chronic. At Penkridge, in Coventry, where you have just endowed a cathedral and enriched a bishop, there are no beds in the cabins, and they dig holes in the earth, in which to put the little children to lie, so that instead of beginning life in the cradle, they begin it in the grave. I have seen these things! My lords, do you know who pays the taxes you vote? The dying! Alas! you deceive yourselves. You are going the wrong road. You augment the poverty of the poor to increase the riches of the rich. You should do the reverse. What! take from the worker to give to the idle, take from the tattered to give to the well-clad; take from the beggar to give to the prince! Oh, yes! I have old republican blood in my veins. I have a horror of these things. How I execrate kings! And how shameless are the women! I have been told a sad story. How I hate Charles II.! A woman whom my father loved, gave herself to that king whilst my father was dying in exile. The prostitute! Charles II., James II.! After a scamp, a scoundrel. What is there in a king? A man,

feeble and contemptible, subject to wants and infirmities. Of what good is a king? You cultivate that parasite, royalty; you make a serpent of that worm, a dragon of that insect. Oh, pity the poor! You increase the weight of the taxes for the profit of the throne. Look to the laws which you decree. Take heed of the suffering swarm which you crush. Cast your eyes down. Look at what is at your feet. O ye great, there are the little. Have pity! yes, have pity on yourselves; for the people is in its agony, and when the lower part of the trunk dies, the higher parts die too. Death spares no limb. When night comes no one can keep his corner of daylight. Are you selfish? then save others. The destruction of the vessel cannot be a matter of indifference to any passenger. There can be no wreck for some that is not wreck for all. Oh! believe it, the abyss yawns for all!"

The laughter increased and became irresistible. For that matter, such extravagance as there were in his words was sufficient to amuse any assembly. To be comic without and tragic within, what suffering can be more humiliating? what pain deeper? Gwynplaine felt it. His words were an appeal in one direction, his face in the other. What a terrible position was his?

Suddenly, his voice rang out in strident bursts.

"How gay these men are! Be it so. Here is irony face to face with agony; a sneer mocking the death-rattle. They are all-powerful. Perhaps so; be it so. We shall see. Behold! I am one of them; but I am, also, one of you, O ye poor! A king sold me. A poor man sheltered me. Who mutilated me? A prince. Who healed and nourished me? A pauper. I am Lord Clancharlie; but I am still Gwynplaine. I take my place amongst the great; but I belong to the mean. I am amongst those who rejoice; but I am with those who suffer. Oh, this system of society is false! Some day will come that which is true. Then, there will be no more lords; and there shall be free and living men. There will be no more masters; there will be fathers. Such is the future. No more prostration; no more baseness; no more ignorance; no more human beasts of burden; no more courtiers; no more toadies; no more kings; but Light! In the meantime, see me here. I have a right, and I will use it. Is

it a right? No, if I use it for myself. Yes, if I use it for all. I will speak to you, my lords, being one of you. O my brothers below, I will tell them of your nakedness. I will rise up with a bundle of the people's rags in my hand. I will shake off over the masters the misery of the slaves; and these favored and arrogant ones shall no longer be able to escape the remembrance of the wretched, nor the princes the itch of the poor; and so much the worse, if it be the bite of vermin; and so much the better if it awake the lions from their slumber."

Here Gwynplaine turned towards the kneeling under-clerks, who were writing on the fourth woolsack.

"Who are those fellows kneeling down? What are you doing? Get up: you are men."

These words, suddenly addressed to inferiors whom a lord ought not even to perceive, increased the merriment to the utmost.

They had cried, "Bravo!" Now they shouted, "Hurrah!" From clapping their hands, they proceeded to stamping their feet. One might have been back in the Green Box, only that there the laughter applauded Gwynplaine; here it exterminated him. The effort of ridicule is to kill. Men's laughter sometimes exerts all its powers to murder.

The laughter proceeded to action. Sneering words rained down upon him. Humor is the folly of assemblies. Their ingenious and foolish ridicule shuns facts instead of studying them, and condemns questions instead of solving them. Any extraordinary occurrence is a point of interrogation; to laugh at it is like laughing at an enigma. But the Sphinx, which never laughs, is behind it.

Contradictory shouts arose,—

"Enough! enough!" "Encore! encore!"

William Farmer, Baron Leimpster, flung at Gwynplaine the insult cast by Rye Quiney at Shakespeare,—

"Histrio, mima!"

Lord Vaughan, a sententious man, twentieth on the barons' bench, exclaimed,—

"We must be back in the days when animals had the gift of speech. In the midst of human tongues the jaw of a beast has spoken."

"Listen to Baalam's ass," added Lord Yarmouth.

Lord Yarmouth presented the appearance of sagacity produced by a round nose and a crooked mouth.

"The rebel Linnæus is chastised in his tomb. The son is the punishment of the father," said John Hough, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, whose prebendary Gwynplaine's attack had glanced.

"He lies!" said Lord Cholmondeley, the legislator so well read-up in the law. "That which he calls torture is only the *peine forte et dure*, and a very good thing too. Torture is not practised in England."

Thomas Wentworth, Baron Raby, addressed the Chancellor.

"My Lord Chancellor, adjourn the House."

"No, no. Let him go on. He is amusing. Hurrah! hip! hip! hip!"

Thus shouted the young lords, their fun amounting to fury. Four of them especially were in the full exasperation of hilarity and hate. These were Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; Thomas Tufton, Earl of Thanet; Viscount Hatton; and the Duke of Montagu.

"To your tricks, Gwynplaine!" cried Rochester.

"Put him out, put him out!" shouted Thanet.

Viscount Hatton drew from his pocket a penny, which he flung to Gwynplaine.

And John Campbell, Earl of Greenwich; Savage, Earl Rivers; Thompson, Baron Haversham; Warrington, Escrik, Rolleston, Rockingham, Carteret, Langdale, Barcester, Maynard, Hunsdon, Caernarvon, Cavendish, Burlington, Robert Darcy, Earl of Holderness, Other Windsor, Earl of Plymouth, applauded.

There was a tumult as of pandemonium or of pantheon, in which the words of Gwynplaine were lost.

Amidst it all, there was heard but one word of Gwynplaine's: "Beware!"

Ralph, Duke of Montagu, recently down from Oxford, and still a beardless youth, descended from the bench of dukes, where he sat the nineteenth in order, and placed himself in front of Gwynplaine, with his arms folded. In a sword there is a spot which cuts sharpest, and in a voice an accent which insults most keenly. Montagu spoke, with that accent and sneering with his face close to that of Gwynplaine, shouted,—

"What are you talking about?"

"I am prophesying," said Gwynplaine.

The laughter exploded anew; and below this laughter, anger growled its continued

bass. One of the minors, Lionel Cranfield Sackville, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, stood up on his seat, not smiling, but grave as became a future legislator, and, without saying a word, looked at Gwynplaine with his fresh twelve-year old face and shrugged his shoulders. Whereat the Bishop of St. Asaph's whispered in the ear of the Bishop of St. David's, who was sitting beside him, as he pointed to Gwynplaine, "There is the fool;" then pointing to the child, "there is the sage."

A chaos of complaint rose from amidst the confusion of exclamations:—

"Gorgon's face!"—"What does it all mean?"—"An insult to the House!"—"The fellow ought to be put out!"—"What a mad-man!"—"Shame! shame!"—"Adjourn the House!"—"No; let him finish his speech!"—"Talk away you buffoon!"

Lord Lewis of Duras, with his arms akimbo, shouted,—

"Ah! it does one good to laugh. My spleen is cured. I propose a vote of thanks in these terms: "The House of Lords returns thanks to the Green Box."

Gwynplaine, it may be remembered, had dreamt of a different welcome.

A man who, climbing up a steep and crumbling acclivity of sand above a giddy precipice, has felt it giving way under his hands, his nails, his elbows, his knees, his feet; who, losing instead of gaining on his treacherous way, a prey to every terror of the danger, slipping back instead of ascending, increasing the certainty of his fall by his very efforts to gain the summit, and losing ground in every struggle for safety—has felt the abyss approaching nearer and nearer, until the certainty of his coming fall into the yawning jaws open to receive him, has frozen the marrow of his bones; that man has experienced the sensations of Gwynplaine.

He felt the ground he had ascended crumbling under him, and his audience was the precipice.

There is always some one to say the word which sums all up.

Lord Scarsdale translated the impression of the assembly in one exclamation,—

"What is the monster doing here?"

Gwynplaine stood up, dismayed and indignant, in a sort of final convulsion. He looked at them all fixedly.

"What am I doing here? I have come to

be a terror to you! I am a monster, do you say? No! I am the people! I am an exception? No! I am the rule; you are the exception! You are the chimera; I am the reality! I am the frightful man who laughs! Who laughs at what? At you, at himself, at everything! What is his laugh? Your crime and his torment! That crime he flings at your head! That punishment he spits in your face! I laugh and that means I weep!"

He paused. There was less noise. The laughter continued, but it was more subdued. He may have fancied that he had regained a certain amount of attention. He breathed again and resumed,—

"This laugh which is on my face a king placed there. This laugh expresses the desolation of mankind. This laugh means hate, enforced silence, rage, despair. This laugh is the production of torture. This laugh is a forced laugh. If Satan were marked with this laugh, it would convict God. But the Eternal is not like them that perish. Being absolute, he is just; and God hates the acts of kings. Oh! you take me for an exception; but I am a symbol. Oh, all-powerful men, fools that you are! open your eyes. I am the incarnation of All. I represent humanity such as its masters have made it. Mankind is mutilated. That which has been done to me has been done to it. In it, have been deformed right, justice, ruth, reason, intelligence, as eyes, nostrils, and ears have been deformed in me; its heart has been made a sink of passion and pain, like mine, and, like mine, its features have been hidden in a mask of joy. Where God had placed his finger, the king set his sign-manuel. Monstrous superposition! Bishops, peers, and princes, the people is a sea of suffering, smiling on the surface. My lords, I tell you that the people are as I am. To-day you oppress them; to-day you hoot at me. But the future is the ominous thaw, in which that which was as stone shall become wave. The appearance of solidity melts into liquid. A crack in the ice, and all is over. There will come an hour when convulsion shall break down your oppression; when an angry roar will reply to your jeers. Nay, that hour did come! Thou wert of it, O my Father! That hour of God did come, and was called the Republic! It was destroyed, but it will return. Meanwhile, remember that the line of kings armed with the sword was broken by Cromwell, armed

with the axe. Tremble! Incorruptible solutions are at hand: the talons which were cut are growing again; the tongues which were torn out are floating away, they are turning to tongues of fire, and scattered by the breath of darkness, are shouting through infinity; those who hunger are showing their idle teeth; false heavens, built over real hells are tottering. The people are suffering—they are suffering; and that which is on high totters, and that which is below yawns. Darkness demands its change to light; the damned discuss the elect. Behold! it is the coming of the people, the ascent of mankind, the beginning of the end, the red dawn of the catastrophe! Yes, all these things are in this laugh of mine, at which you laugh to-day! London is one perpetual fête. Be it so. From one end to the other, England rings with acclamation. Well! but listen. All that you see is I. You have your fêtes—they are my laugh; you have your public rejoicings—they are my laugh; you have your weddings, consecrations, and coronations—they are my laugh. The births of your princes are my laugh. But above you is the thunderbolt—it is my laugh.”

How could they stand such nonsense? The laughter burst out afresh; and now it was overwhelming. Of all the lava which that crater the human mouth, ejects, the most corrosive is joy. To inflict evil gaily is a contagion which no crowd can resist. All executions do not take place on the scaffold; and men, from the moment they are in a body, whether in mobs or in senates, have always a ready executioner amongst them, called sarcasm. There is no torture to be compared to that of the wretch condemned to execution by ridicule. This was Gwynplaine's fate. He was stoned with their jokes, and riddled by the scoffs shot at him. He stood there a mark for all. They sprang up; they cried, “Encore;” they shook with laughter; they stamped their feet; they pulled each other's bands. The majesty of the place, the purple of the robes, the chaste ermine, the dignity of the wigs, had no effect. The lord laughed, the bishops laughed, the judges laughed, the old men's benches derided, the children's benches were in convulsions. The Archbishop of Canterbury nudged the Archbishop of York; Henry Compton, Bishop of London, Brother of Lord Northampton, held his sides; the Lord

Chancellor bent down his head, probably to conceal his inclination to laugh; and, at the bar, that statue of respect, the Usher of the Black Rod, was laughing also.

Gwynplaine, became pallid, and folded his arms; and, surrounded by all those faces, young and old, in which had burst forth this grand Homeric jubilee; in that whirlwind of clapping hands, and stamping feet, and of hurrahs; in that mad buffoonery, of which he was the centre; in that splendid overflow of hilarity; in the midst of that unmeasured gaiety, he felt that the sepulchre was within him. All was over. He could no longer master the face which betrayed, nor the audience which insulted, him.

That eternal and fatal law, by which the grotesque is linked with the sublime—by which the laugh re-echoes the groan, parody rides behind despair, and seeming is opposed to being—had never found more terrible expression. Never had a light more sinister illumined the depths of human darkness.

Gwynplaine was assisting at the final destruction of his destiny by a burst of laughter. The irremediable was in this. Having fallen, we can raise ourselves up; but, being pulverized, never. And the insult of their sovereign mockery had reduced him to dust. From thenceforth nothing was possible. Everything is in accordance with the scene. That which was triumph in the Green Box, was disgrace and catastrophe in the House of Lords. What was applause there, was insult here. He felt something like the reverse side of his mask. On one side of that mask he had the sympathy of the people, who welcomed Gwynplaine; On the other, the contempt of the great, rejecting Lord Fermain Clancharlie. On one side, attraction; on the other, repulsion; both leading him towards the shadows. He felt himself, as it were, struck from behind. Fate strikes treacherous blows. Everything will be explained hereafter, but in the meantime, destiny is a snare and man sinks into its pitfalls. He had expected to rise, and was welcomed by laughter. Such apotheoses have lugubrious terminations. There is a dreary expression—to be sobered; tragical wisdom born of drunkenness! In the midst of that tempest of gayety commingled with ferocity, Gwynplaine fell into a reverie.

An assembly in mad merriment drifts as chance directs, and loses its compass when it

gives itself to laughter. None knew whither they were tending, or what they were doing. The house was obliged to rise, adjourned by the Lord Chancellor, "owing to extraordinary circumstances," to the next day. The peers broke up. They bowed to the royal throne and departed. Echoes of prolonged laughter being heard losing themselves in the corridors.

Assemblies, besides their official doors, have—under tapestry, under projections, and under arches—all sorts of hidden doors, by which the members escape like water through cracks in a vase. In a short time the chamber was deserted. This takes place quickly and almost imperceptibly, and those places, so lately full of voices, are suddenly given back to silence.

Reverie carries one far; and one comes by long dreaming to reach, as it were, another planet.

Gwynplaine suddenly awoke from such a dream. He was alone. The chamber was empty. He had not even observed that the House had been adjourned. All the peers had departed, even his sponsors. There only remained here and there some of the lower officers of the House, waiting for his lordship to depart before they put the covers on, and extinguished the lights.

Mechanically he placed his hat on his head, and leaving his place, directed his steps to the great door opening into the gallery. As he was passing through the opening in the bar, a doorkeeper relieved him of his peers robes. This he scarcely felt. In another instant, he was in the gallery.

The officials who remained observed with astonishment that the peer had gone out without bowing to the throne!

## CHAPTER VIII.

HE WOULD BE A GOOD BROTHER, WERE HE  
NOT A GOOD SON.

THERE was no one in the gallery.

Gwynplaine crossed the circular space, from whence they had removed the arm-chair and tables, and where there now remained no trace of his investiture. Candelabra and lustres, placed at certain intervals, marked the way out. Thanks to this string of light, he retraced without difficulty,

through the suite of saloons and galleries, the way which he had followed on his arrival with the King-at-Arms and the Usber of the Black Rod. He saw no one, except here and there some old lord with tardy steps, plodding along heavily in front of him.

Suddenly, in the silence of those great deserted rooms, bursts of indistinct exclamations reached him, a sort of nocturnal clatter unusual in such a place. He directed his steps to the place whence this noise proceeded, and found himself in a spacious hall, dimly lighted, which was one of the exits from the House of Lords. He saw a great glass door open, a flight of steps, footmen and links, a square outside, and a few coaches waiting at the bottom of the steps.

This was the spot from which the noise which he had heard proceeded.

Within the door, and under the hall lamp, was a noisy group in a storm of gestures and of voices.

Gwynplaine approached in the gloom.

They were quarrelling. On one side there were ten or twelve young lords, who wanted to go out; on the other, a man, with his hat on, like themselves, upright and with haughty brow, who barred their peerage.

Who was that man? Tom-Jim-Jack.

Some of these lords were still in their robes, others had thrown them off, and were in their usual attire. Tom-Jim-Jack wore a hat with plumes—not white, like the peers; but green tipped with orange. He was embroidered and laced from head to foot, had flowing bows of ribbon and lace round his wrists and neck, and was feverishly fingering with his left hand the hilt of the sword, which hung from his waistbelt, and on the billets and scabbard of which were embroidered an admiral's anchors.

It was he who was speaking and addressing the young lords; and Gwynplaine overheard the following:—

"I have told you you are cowards. You wish me to withdraw my words. Be it so. You are not cowards; you are idiots. You all combined against one man. That was not cowardice. All right. Then it was stupidity. He spoke to you, and you did not understand him. Here, the old are hard of hearing, the young devoid of intelligence. I am one of your own order to quite sufficient extent to tell you the truth. This new comer is strange, and he has uttered a heap of non-

sense, I admit; but amidst all that nonsense there were some things which are true. His speech was confused, undigested, ill-delivered. Be it so. He repeated, 'You know, you know,' too often; but a man who was but yesterday a clown at a fair cannot be expected to speak like Aristotle or like Doctor Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. The vermin, the lions, the address to the under-clerks—all that was in bad taste. Zounds! who says it wasn't? It was a senseless and fragmentary and topsy-turvy harangue; but here and there came out facts which were true. It is no small thing to speak even as he did, seeing it is not his trade. I should like to see you do it. Yes; you! What he said about the lepers at Burton Lazars is an undeniable fact. Besides, he is not the first man who has talked nonsense. In fine, my lords, I do not like to see the many set upon one. Such is my humor; and I ask your lordships' permission to take offence. You have displeased me; I am angry. I am grateful to God for having drawn up from the depth of his low existence this peer of England, and for having given back his inheritance to the heir; and without heeding whether it will or will not affect my own affairs, I consider it a beautiful sight to see an insect transformed into an eagle, and Gwynplaine into Lord Clancharlie. My lords, I forbid you holding any opinion but mine. I regret that Lord Lewis Duras should not be here. I should like to insult him. My lords, it is Fermain Clancharlie who has been the peer, and you who have been the mountebanks. As to his laugh, it is not his fault. You have laughed at that laugh; men should not laugh at misfortune. If you think that people cannot laugh at you as well, you are very much mistaken. You are ugly. You are badly dressed. My Lord Haversham, I saw your mistress the other day; she is hideous—a duchess, but a monkey. Gentlemen who laugh, I repeat that I should like to hear you try to say four words running! many men jabber; very few speak. You imagine you know something, because you have kept idle terms at Oxford or Cambridge, and because, before being peers of England on the benches of Westminster, you have been asses on the benches at Gonville and Caius. Here I am; and I choose to stare you in the face. You have just been impudent to this new peer. A monster, certainly; but a monster given up

to beasts. I had rather be that man than you. I was present at the sitting, in my place as a possible heir to a peerage. I heard all. I have not the right to speak; but I have the right to be a gentleman. Your jeering airs annoyed me. When I am angry I would go up to Mount Pendlehill, and pick the cloudberry which brings the thunderbolt down on the gatherer. That is the reason why I have waited for you at the door. We must have a few words, for we have arrangements to make. Did it not strike you that you failed a little in respect towards myself? My lords, I entertain a firm determination to kill a few of you. All you who are here—Thomas Tufton, Earl of Thanet; Savage, Earl Rivers; Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland; Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; you Barons, Gray of Rolleston, Cary Hunsdon, Escrick, Rockingham, little Cartaret; Robert Darcy, Earl of Holderness; William, Viscount Hutton; and Ralph, Duke of Montagu; and any who choose, I, David Dirry-Moir, an officer of the fleet, summon, call, and command you to provide yourselves, in all haste, with seconds, and umpires, and I will meet you face to face and hand to hand, to-night, at once, to-morrow, by day or night, by sunlight or candlelight, where, when, or how you please, so long as there is two sword-lengths' space; and you will do well to look to the flints of your pistols and the edges of your rapiers, for it is my firm intention to cause vacancies in your peerages. Ogle Cavendish, take your measures, and think of your motto, *Cavendo tutus*; Marmaduke Langdale, you will do well, like your ancestor, Grinold, to order a coffin to be brought with you. George Booth, Earl of Warrington, you will never again see the County Palatine of Chester, or your labyrinth like that of Crete, or the high towers of Dunham Massy! As to Lord Vaughan, he is young enough to talk impertinently, and too old to answer for it. I shall demand satisfaction for his words, of his nephew Richard Vaughan, Member of Parliament for the borough of Merioneth. As for you, John Campbell, Earl of Greenwich, I will kill you as Achon killed Matas; but with a fair cut, and not from behind, it being my custom to present my heart not my back to the point of the sword. I have spoken my mind, my lords. And so use witchcraft, if you like. Consult the fortune-tellers. Grease your skins with

ointments and drugs to make them invulnerable; hang round your necks charms of the devil or the virgin; I will fight you blest or curst, and I will not have you searched to see if you are wearing any wizard's tokens. On foot or on horseback, on the high road if you wish it, in Piccadilly, or at Charing Cross; and they shall take up the pavement for our meeting, as they unpaved the court of the Louvre for the duel between Guise and Bassompierre. All of you! Do you hear? I mean to fight you all. Dorme, Earl of Caernarvon, I will make you swallow my sword up to the hilt, as Marolles did to Lisle Mariveaux, and then we shall see, my lord, whether you will laugh or not. You, Burlington, who look like a girl of seventeen, you shall choose between the lawn of your house in Middlesex, and your beautiful garden at Londesborough, in Yorkshire, to be buried in. I beg to inform your lordships that it does not suit me to allow your insolence in my presence. I will chastise you, my lords. I take it ill that you should have ridiculed Lord Fermain Clancharlie. He is worth more than you. As Clancharlie, he has nobility, which you have. As Gwynplaine, he has intellect, which you have not. I make his cause my cause, insult to him insult to me, and your ridicule my wrath. We shall see who will come out of this affair alive, because I challenge you to the death. Do you understand? With any arm, in any fashion, and you shall choose the death that pleases you best; and since you are clowns as well as gentlemen, I proportion my defiance to your qualities, and I give you your choice of any way in which a man can be killed, from the sword of the prince to the fist of the blackguard."

To this furious onslaught of words, the whole group of young noblemen answered by a smile. "Agreed" they said.

"I choose pistols," said Burlington.

"I" said Eserick, "the ancient combat of the lists, with the mace and the dagger."

"I," said Holderness, "the duel with two knives, long and short, stripped to the waist, and breast to breast."

"Lord David," said the Earl of Thanet, "you are a Scot. I choose the claymore."

"I, the sword," said Rockingham.

"I," said the Duke Ralph, "prefer the fists; 'tis noblest."

Gwynplaine came out from the shadow.

He directed his steps towards him whom he had hitherto called Tom-Tim-Jack, but in whom now, however, he began to perceive something more. "I thank you," said he, "but this is my business."

Every head turned towards him.

Gwynplaine advanced. He felt himself impelled towards the man whom he heard called Lord David; his defender, and perhaps something nearer. Lord David drew back.

"Oh!" said he. "It is you, is it? This is well-timed. I have a word for you as well. Just now you spoke of a woman, who, after having loved Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, loved Charles II."

"It is true."

"Sir, you insulted my mother."

"Your mother!" cried Gwynplaine. "In that case, as I guessed, we are——"

"Brothers," answered Lord David, and he struck Gwynplaine. "We are brothers," said he; so we can fight. One can only fight one's equal; who is one's equal if not one's brother? I will send you my seconds: tomorrow we will cut each others throats."

## BOOK THE NINTH.

### IN RUINS.

#### CHAPTER I.

IT IS THROUGH EXCESS OF GREATNESS THAT  
MAN REACHES EXCESS OF MISERY.

As midnight tolled from St. Paul's, a man who had just crossed London Bridge struck into the lanes of Southwark. There were no lamps lighted, it being at that time the custom in London, as in Paris, to extinguish the public lamps at eleven o'clock; that is, to put them out just as they became necessary. The streets were dark and deserted. When the lamps are out, men stay in. He whom we speak of advanced with hurried strides. He was strangely dressed for walking at such an hour. He wore a coat of embroidered silk, a sword by his side, a hat with white plumes, and no cloak. The watchmen, as they saw him pass, said, "It is a lord walking for a wager," and they moved out of his way with the respect due to a lord and to a better.

The man was Gwynplaine. He was making his escape. Where was he? He did not know. We have said that the soul has its cyclones; fearful whirlwinds, in which heaven, the sea, day, night, life, death, are all mingled in unintelligible horror. It can no longer breathe Truth; it is crushed by things in which it does not believe. Nothingness becomes hurricane. The firmament pales. Infinite is empty. The mind of the sufferer wanders away. He feels himself dying. He craves for a star. What did Gwynplaine feel? a thirst; a thirst to see Dea.

He felt but that. To reach the Green Box again, and the Tadcaster Inn, with its sounds and light; full of the cordial laughter of the people; to find Ursus and Homo, to see Dea again, to re-enter life. Disillusion, like a bow, shoots its arrow, man, towards the True. Gwynplaine hastened on. He approached Tarrinzeau Field. He walked no longer now, he ran. His eyes pierced the darkness before him. His glance preceded him, eagerly seeking the harbor on the horizon. What a moment for him when he should see the lighted windows of Tadcaster Inn!

He reached the bowling-green. He turned the corner of the wall, and saw before him, at the other end of the field, some distance off, the inn—the only house, it may be remembered, in the field where the fair was held.

He looked. There was no light; nothing but a black mass.

He shuddered. Then he said to himself that it was late, that the tavern was shut up, that it was very natural, that every one was asleep, that he had only to awaken Nicless or Govicum, that he must go up to the inn and knock at the door. He did so, running no longer now, but rushing.

He reached the inn, breathless. It is when stormbeaten and struggling in the invisible convulsions of the soul until he knows not whether he is in life or in death, that all the delicacy of a man's affection for his loved ones, being yet unimpaired, proves a heart true. When all else is swallowed up, tenderness still floats unshattered. Not to awaken Dea too suddenly was Gwynplaine's first thought. He approached the inn with as little noise as possible. He recognized the nook, the old dog kennel, where Govicum used to sleep. In it, contiguous to the lower room, was a window opening on to the field.

Gwynplaine tapped softly at the pane. It would be enough to awaken Govicum, he thought.

There was no sound in Govicum's room.

"At his age," said Gwynplaine, "a boy sleeps soundly."

With the back of his hand he knocked against the window gently. Nothing stirred.

He knocked louder twice. Still nothing stirred. Then feeling somewhat uneasy, he went to the door of the inn and knocked. No one answered. He reflected, and began to feel a cold shudder come over him.

"Master Nicless is old, children sleep soundly, and old men heavily. Courage! louder!"

He had tapped, he had knocked, he had kicked the door; now he flung himself against it.

This recalled to him a distant memory of Weymouth, when a little child, he had carried Dea, an infant in his arms.

He battered the door again violently, like a lord, which, alas! he was.

The house remained silent. He felt that he was losing his head. He no longer thought of caution. He shouted,—

"Nicless! Govicum!"

At the same time he looked up at the windows, to see if any candle was lighted. But the inn was blank. Not a voice, not a sound, not a glimmer of light. He went to the gate and knocked at it, kicked against it, and shook it, crying out wildly,—

"Ursus! Homo!"

The wolf did not bark.

A cold sweat stood in drops upon his brow. He cast his eyes around. The night was dark; but there were stars enough to render the fair-green visible. He saw—a melancholy sight to him—that everything on it had vanished.

There was not a single caravan. The circus was gone. Not a tent, not a booth, not a cart remained. The strollers, with their thousand noisy cries, who had swarmed there had given place to a black and sullen void.

All were gone.

The madness of anxiety took possession of him. What did this mean? What had happened? Was no one left? Could it be that life had crumbled away behind him? What had happened to them all? Good heavens! Then he rushed like a tempest against the house. He struck the small door,



the gate, the windows, the window-shutters, the walls with fists and feet, furious with terror and agony of mind.

He called Nicless, Govicum, Fibi, Vinos, Ursus, Homo. He tried every shout and every sound against this wall. At times he waited and listened; but the house remained mute and dead. Then exasperated, he began again with blows, shouts, and repeated knockings, re-echoed all around. It might have been thunder trying to awake the grave.

There is a certain stage of fright in which a man becomes terrible. He who fears everything, fears nothing. He would strike the Sphinx. He defies the Unknown.

Gwynplaine renewed the noise in every possible form, stopping, resuming, unwearying in the shouts and appeals by which he assailed the tragic silence. He called a thousand times on the names of those who should have been there. He shrieked out every name except that of Dea, a precaution of which he could not have explained the reason himself, but which instinct inspired even in his distraction.

Having exhausted calls and cries, nothing was left but to break in.

"I must enter the house," he said to himself; "but how?"

He broke a pane of glass in Govicum's room by thrusting his hand through it, tearing the flesh; he drew the bolt of the sash and opened the window. Perceiving that his sword was in the way, he tore it off angrily, scabbard, blade, and belt, and flung it on the pavement. Then he raised himself up by the inequalities in the wall, and, though the window was narrow, he was able to pass through it. He entered the inn. Govicum's bed, dimly visible in its nook, was there; but Govicum was not in it. If Govicum was not in his bed, it was evident that Nicless could not be in his.

The whole of the house was dark. He felt in that shadowy interior the mysterious immobility of emptiness, and that vague fear which signifies—"There is no one here."

Gwynplaine, convulsed with anxiety, crossed the lower room, knocking against the tables, upsetting the earthenware, throwing down the benches, sweeping against the jugs, and, striding over the furniture, reached the door leading into the court, and broke it open with one blow from his knee, which sprung

the lock. The door turned on its hinges. He looked into the court. The Green Box was no longer there.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DREGS.

GWYNPLAINE left the house, and began to explore Tarrinzeau Field in every direction. He went to every place where, the day before, the tents and caravans had stood. He knocked at the stalls, though he knew well that they were uninhabited. He struck everything that looked like a door or a window. Not a voice arose from the darkness. Something like death had been there.

The ant-hill had been razed. Some measures of police had apparently been carried out. There had been what, in our days, would be called a *razzia*. Tarrinzeau Field was worse than a desert; it had been scoured, and every corner of it scratched up, as it were, by pitiless claws. The pocket of the unfortunate fairgreen had been turned inside out, and completely emptied.

Gwynplaine, after having searched every yard of ground, left the green, struck into the crooked streets abutting on the site called East Point, and directed his steps towards the Thames. He had threaded his way through a network of lanes, bounded only by walls and hedges, when he felt the fresh breeze from the water, heard the dull lapping of the river, and suddenly saw a parapet in front of him. It was the parapet of the Effroc stone.

This parapet bounded a block of the quay, which was very short and very narrow. Under it the high wall, the Effroc stone, buried itself perpendicularly in the dark water below.

Gwynplaine stopped at the parapet, and, leaning his elbows on it, laid his head in his hands and set to thinking, with the water beneath him.

Did he look at the water? No. At what then? At the shadow; not the shadow without but within. In the melancholy night-bound landscape, which he scarcely marked, —in the outer depths, which his eyes did not pierce, were the blurred sketches of masts and spars. Below the Effroc stone there was nothing on the river; but the quay sloped insensibly downwards till some distance off, it

met a pier, at which several vessels were lying, some of which had just arrived, others which were on the point of departure. These vessels communicate with the shore by little jetties, constructed for the purpose, some of stone, some of wood, or by movable gangways. All of them, whether moored to the jetties or at anchor, were wrapt in silence. There was neither voice nor movement on board, it being a good habit of sailors to sleep when they can, and awake only when wanted. If any of them were to sail during the night at high tide, the crews were not yet awake. The hulls, like large bubbles, and the rigging, like threads mingled with ladders, were barely visible. All was livid and confused. Here and there a red cresset pierced the haze.

Gwynplaine saw nothing of all this. What he was musing on was destiny.

He was in a dream—a vision—giddy in presence of an inexorable reality.

He fancied that he heard behind him something like an earthquake. It was the laughter of the Lords.

From that laughter he had just emerged. He had come out of it, having received a blow, and from whom?

From his own brother.

Flying from the laughter, carrying with him the blow, seeking refuge, a wounded bird, in his nest, rushing from hate and seeking love, what had he found?

Darkness.

No one.

Everything gone.

He compared that darkness to the dream he had indulged in.

What a crumbling away!

Gwynplaine had just reached that sinister bound—the void. The Green Box gone, was his universe vanished.

His soul had been closed up.

He reflected.

What could have happened? Where were they? They had evidently been carried away. Destiny had given him, Gwynplaine, a blow, which was greatness; its reaction had struck them another, which was annihilation. It was clear that he would never see them again. Precautions had been taken against that. They had scoured fair-green, beginning by Nicless and Govicum, so that he should gain no clue through them. Inexorable dispersion! That fearful social system, at the same time that it had pulverized him in the

House of Lords, had crushed them in their little cabin. They were lost; Dea was lost—lost to him for ever. Powers of heaven! where was she? And he had not been there to defend her!

To have to make guesses as to the absent whom we love, is to put oneself to the torture. He inflicted this torture on himself. At every thought that he fathomed, at every supposition which he made, he felt within him a moan of agony.

Through a succession of bitter reflections he remembered a man who was evidently fatal to him, and who had called himself Barkilphedro. That man had inscribed on his brain a dark sentence which reappeared now, he had written it in such terrible ink that every letter had turned to fire; and Gwynplaine saw flaming at the bottom of his thought the enigmatical words, the meaning of which was at length solved: "Destiny never opens one door, without closing another."

All was over. The final shadows had gathered about him. In every man's fate there may be an end of the world for himself alone. It is called despair. The soul is full of morning stars.

This, then, was what he had come to.

A vapor had passed. He had been mingled with it. It had lain heavily on his eyes, it had disordered his brain. He had been outwardly blinded, intoxicated within. This had lasted the time of a passing vapor. Then everything melted away, the vapor and his life. Awaking from the dream, he found himself alone.

All vanished, all gone, all lost. Night. Nothingness. Such was his horizon.

He was alone.

Alone has a synonyme, which is dead. Despair is an accountant. It sets itself to find its total, it adds up everything, even to the farthings. It reproaches Heaven with its thunderbolts and its pin-pricks. It seeks to find what it has to expect from fate. It argues, weighs, and calculates, outwardly cool, while the burning lava is still flowing on within.

Gwynplaine examined himself, and examined his fate.

The backward glance of thought; terrible recapitulation!

When at the top of a mountain, we look down the precipice: when at the bottom, we look up at heaven. And we say, I was there.

Gwynplaine was at the very bottom of misfortune. How sudden, too, had been his fall!

Such is the hideous swiftness of misfortune, although it is so heavy that we might fancy it slow. But no! It would likewise appear that snow, from its coldness, ought to be the paralysis of winter, and, from its whiteness, the immobility of the winding-sheet. Yet this is contradicted by the avalanche.

The avalanche is snow become a furnace. It remains frozen, but it devours. The avalanche had enveloped Gwynplaine. He had been torn like a rag, uprooted like a tree, precipitated like a stone. He recalled all the circumstances of his fall. He put himself questions, and returned answers. Grief is an examination. There is no judge so searching as conscience conducting its own trial.

What amount of remorse was there in his despair? This he wished to find out, and dissected his conscience. Excruciating vivisection!

His absence had caused a catastrophe. Had this absence depended on him? In all that had happened, had he been a free agent? No! He had felt himself captive. What was that which had arrested and detained him—a prison? No. A chain? No. What then? Sticky slime! He had sunk into the slough of greatness.

To whom it has not happened to be free in appearance, yet to feel that his wings are hampered?

There had been something like a snare spread for him. What is at first temptation, ends by captivity.

Nevertheless (and his conscience pressed him on this point)—had he merely submitted to what had been offered him? No; he had accepted it.

Violence and surprise had been used with him in a certain measure, it was true; but he, in a certain measure, had given in. To have allowed himself to be carried off, was not his fault; But to have allowed himself to be inebriated, was his weakness. There had been a moment—a decisive moment—when the question was proposed. This Barkilphedro had placed a dilemma before Gwynplaine, and had given him clear power to decide his fate by a word. Gwynplaine might have said, "No." He had said, "Yes."

From that, "Yes," uttered in a moment of

dizziness, everything had sprung. Gwynplaine realized this now in the bitter aftertaste of that consent.

Nevertheless—for he debated with himself—was it then so great a wrong to take possession of his right, of his patrimony, of his heritage, of his house; and, as a patrician, of the rank of his ancestors; as an orphan, of the name of his father? What had he accepted? A restitution. Made by whom? By Providence.

Then his mind revolted. Senseless acceptance! What a bargain had he struck! what a foolish exchange! He had trafficked with Providence at a loss. How now! For an income of 80,000*l.* a year; for seven or eight titles; for ten or twelve palaces; for houses in town, and castles in the country; for a hundred lacqueys; for packs of hounds, and earriages, and armorial bearings; to be a judge and legislator; for a coronet and purple robes, like a king; to be a baron and a marquis; to be a peer of England, he had given the hut of Ursus and the smile of Dea. For shipwreck and destruction in the surging immensity of greatness, he had bartered happiness. For the ocean he had given the pearl. O madman! O fool! O dupe!

Yet, nevertheless,—and here the objection reappeared on firmer ground,—in this fever of high fortune which had seized him, all had not been unwholesome. Perhaps there would have been selfishness in renunciation; perhaps he had done his duty in the acceptance. Suddenly transformed into a lord, what ought he to have done? The complication of events produces perplexity of mind. This had happened to him. Duty gave contrary orders. Duty on all sides at once, duty multiple and contradictory; this was the bewilderment which he had suffered. It was this that had paralyzed him, especially when he had not refused to take the journey from Corleone Lodge to the House of Lords. What we call rising in life is leaving the safe for the dangerous path. Which is, thenceforth, the straight line? Towards whom is our first duty? Is it towards those nearest to ourselves, or is it towards mankind generally? Do we not cease to belong to our own circumscribed circle, and become part of the great family of all? As we ascend, we feel an increased pressure on our virtue. The higher we rise, the greater is the strain. The increase of right is an increase of duty. We

come to many cross-ways, phantom roads perchance, and we imagine that we see the finger of conscience pointing each one of them out to us. Which shall we take? Change our direction, remain where we are, advance, go back? What are we to do? That there should be cross-roads in conscience is strange enough; but responsibility may be a labyrinth. And when a man contains an idea, when he is the incarnation of a fact,—when he is a symbolical man, at the same time that he is a man of flesh and blood,—is not the responsibility still more oppressive? Thence the care-laden docility and the dumb anxiety of Gwynplaine; thence his obedience when summoned to take his seat. A pensive man is often a passive man. He had heard what he fancied was the command of duty itself. Was not that entrance into a place where oppression could be discussed and resisted, the realization of one of his deepest aspirations? When he had been called upon to speak, he, the fearful human scantling, he, the living specimen of the despotic whims under which, for six thousand years, mankind has groaned in agony,—had he the right to refuse? Had he the right to withdraw his head from under the tongue of fire descending from on high to rest upon him?

In the obscure and giddy debate of conscience, what had he said to himself? This: "The people are a silence. I will be the mighty advocate of that silence; I will speak for the dumb; I will speak of the little to the great,—of the weak to the powerful. This is the purpose of my fate. God wills what he wills, and does it. It was a wonder that Hardquanonne's flask, in which was the metamorphosis of Gwynplaine into Lord Clancharlie, should have floated for fifteen years on the ocean, on the billows, in the surf through the storms, and that all the raging of the sea did it no harm. But I can see the reason. There are destinies with secret springs. I have the key of mine, and know its enigma. I am predestined; I have a mission; I will be the poor man's lord; I will speak for the speechless with despair; I will translate inarticulate remonstrance; I will translate the mutterings, the groans, the murmurs, the voices of the crowd; their ill-spoken complaints, their unintelligible words, and those animal-like cries which ignorance and suffering put into men's mouths. The clamor of men is as inarticulate as the howling of the

wind. They cry out, but they are understood; so that cries become equivalent to silence, and silence with them means throwing down their arms. This forced disarmament calls for help. I will be their help; I will be the Denunciation; I will be the Word of the people. Thanks to me, they shall be understood. I will be the bleeding mouth from which the gag has been torn. I will tell everything. This will be great, indeed."

Yes, it is fine to speak for the dumb; but to speak to the deaf is sad. And that was his second part in the drama.

Alas! he had failed irremediably. The elevation in which he had believed, the high fortune, had melted away like a mirage. And what a fall! To be drowned in a surge of laughter!

He had believed himself strong, he who, during so many years, had floated with observant mind on the wide sea of suffering; he who had brought back out of the great shadow so touching a cry. He had been flung against that huge rock, the frivolity of the fortunate. He believed himself an avenger; he was but a clown. He thought that he wielded the thunderbolt; he did but tickle. In place of emotion, he met with mockery. He sobbed; they burst into gayety; and, under that gayety, he had sunk fatally submerged.

And what had they laughed at? At his laugh. So, that trace of a hateful act, of which he must keep the mark forever;—mutilation carved in everlasting gayety; the stigmata of laughter, image of the sham contentment of nations under their oppressors: that mask of joy produced by torture; that abyss of grimace which he carried on his features; the scar which signified *Jessu regis*, the attestation of crime committed by the king towards him, and the symbol of crime committed by royalty towards the people;—that it was which had triumphed over him—that it was which had overwhelmed him; so that the accusation against the executioner turned into sentence upon the victim. What a prodigious denial of justice! Royalty, having had satisfaction of his father, had had satisfaction of him! The evil that had been done had served as pretext and as motive for the evil which remained to be done. Against whom were the lords angered? Against the torturer? No. Against the tortured. Here is the throne; there, the people. Here,

James II.; there, Gwynplaine. That confrontation, indeed, brought to light an outrage and a crime. What was the outrage? Complaint. What was the crime? Suffering. Let misery hide itself in silence, otherwise it becomes treason. And those men who had dragged Gwynplaine on the hurdle of sarcasm, were they wicked? No; but they, too, had their fatality: they were happy. They were executioners, ignorant of the fact. They were good-humored; they saw no use in Gwynplaine. He opened himself to them. He tore out his heart to show them, and they cried "Go on with your play!" But, sharpest sting! he had laughed himself. The frightful chain which tied down his soul hindered his thoughts from rising to his face. His disfigurement reached even his senses; and, while his conscience was indignant, his face gave it the lie, and jested. Then all was over. He was the laughing man, the caryatid of the weeping world. He was an agony petrified in hilarity, carrying the weight of a universe of calamity, and walled up for ever with the gayety, the ridicule, and the amusement of others; of all the Oppressed, of whom he was the Incarnation, he partook the hateful fate, to be a desolation not believed in; they jeered at his distress; to them he was but an extraordinary buffoon lifted out of some frightened condensation of misery, escaped from his prison, changed to a deity, risen from the dregs of the people to the foot of the throne, mingling with the stars, and who, having once amused the damned, now amused the elect. All that was in him of generosity, of enthusiasm, of eloquence, of heart, of soul, of fury, of anger, of love, of inexpressible grief, ended in—a burst of laughter! And he proved, as he had told the lords, that this was not the exception; but that it was the normal, ordinary, universal, unlimited, sovereign fact, so amalgamated with the routine of life, that they took no account of it. The hungry pauper laughs, the beggar laughs, the felon laughs, the prostitute laughs, the orphan laughs to gain his bread; the slave laughs, the soldier laughs, the people laugh. Society is so constituted, that every perdition, every indigence, every catastrophe, every fever, every ulcer, every agony, is resolved on the surface of the abyss into one frightful grin of joy. Now, he was that universal grin, and that grin was himself. The law of heaven, the unknown power

which governs, had willed that a spectre visible and palpable, a spectre of flesh and bone, should be the synopsis of the monstrous parody which we call the world; and he was that spectre. Immutable fate!

He had cried: "Pity for those who suffer." In vain! He had striven to awake pity—he had awakened horror, Such is the law of apparitions.

But while he was a spectre, he was also a man; here was the heartrending complication. A spectre without, a man within. A man more than any other, perhaps, since his double fate was the synopsis of all humanity. And he felt that humanity was at once present in him, and absent from him. There was in his existence something insurmountable. What was he? A disinherited heir? No; for he was a lord. Was he a lord? No; for he was a rebel. He was the light-bearer; a terrible spoil-sport. He was not Satan, certainly; but he was Lucifer. His entrance, with his torch in his hand, was sinister.

Sinister for whom? for the sinister. Terrible to whom? to the terrible. Therefore, they rejected him. Enter their order? be accepted by them? Never. The obstacle which he carried in his face was frightful; but the obstacle which he carried in his ideas was still more insurmountable. His speech was to them more deformed than his face. He had no possible thought in common with the world of the great and powerful, in which he had by a freak of fate been born, and from which another freak of fate had driven him out. There was between men and his face a mask, and between society and his mind, a wall. In mixing, from infancy, a wandering mountebank, with that vast and tough substance which is called the crowd, in saturating himself with the attraction of the multitude, and impregnating himself with the great soul of mankind, he had lost, in the common sense of the whole of mankind, the particular sense of the reigning classes. On their heights, he was impossible. He had reached them wet with water from the well of Truth; the odor of the abyss was on him. He was repugnant to those princes perfumed with lies. To those who live on fiction, truth is disgusting; and he who thirsts for flattery vomits the real, when he has happened to drink it by mistake. That which Gwynplaine brought was not fit for their table. For what

was it? Reason, wisdom, justice; and they rejected them, with disgust.

There were bishops there. He brought God into their presence. Who was this intruder?

The two poles repel each other. They can never amalgamate, for transition is wanting. Hence the result—a cry of anger—when they were brought together in terrible juxtaposition: all misery concentrated in a man, face to face with all pride concentrated in a caste.

To accuse is useless. To state is sufficient. Gwynplaine, meditating on the limits of his destiny, proved the total uselessness of his effort. He proved the deafness of high places. The privileged have no hearing on the side next the disinherited. Is it their fault? Alas! no. It is their law. Forgive them! To be moved would be to abdicate. Of lords and princes expect nothing. He who is satisfied is inexorable. For those that have their fill, the hungry do not exist. The happy ignore and isolate themselves. On the threshold of their paradise, as on the threshold of hell, must be written, "Leave all hope behind."

Gwynplaine had met with the reception of a spectre entering the dwelling of the gods.

Here all that was within him rose in rebellion. No, he was no spectre, he was a man. He told them, he shouted to them, that he was Man.

He was not a phantom. He was palpitating flesh. He had a brain, and he thought; he had a heart, and he loved; he had a soul, and he hoped. Indeed, to have hoped overmuch was his whole crime.

Alas! he had exaggerated hope into believing in that thing at once so brilliant and so dark, which is called Society. He who was without had reentered it. It had at once, and at first sight, made him its three offers, and given him its three gifts—marriage, family, and caste. Marriage? He had seen prostitution on the threshold. Family? His brother had struck him, and he was awaiting him the next day, sword in hand. Caste? It was burst into laughter in his face, at him the patrician, at him the wretch. It had rejected, almost before it had admitted him. So that his first three steps into the dense shadow of society, had opened three gulfs beneath him.

And it was by a treacherous transfiguration that this disaster had begun; and catastrophe

had approached him with the aspect of apotheosis!

Ascend! had signified Descend!

His fate was the reverse of Job's. It was through prosperity that adversity had reached him.

O tragical enigma of life! Behold what pitfalls! A child, he had wrestled against the night, and had been stronger than it; a man, he had wrestled against destiny, and had overcome it. Out of disfigurement he had created success; and out of misery happiness. Of his exile he had made an asylum. A vagabond he had wrestled against space; and, like the birds of the air, he had found his crumb of bread. Wild and solitary, he had wrestled against the crowd, and had made it his friend. An athlete, he had wrestled against that lion, the people; and he had tamed it. Indigent, he had wrestled against distress, he had faced the dull necessity of living, and from amalgamating with misery every joy of his heart, he had at length made riches out of poverty. He had believed himself the conqueror of life. Of a sudden he was attacked by fresh forces, reaching him from unknown depths; this time, with menaces no longer, but with smiles and caresses. Love, serpent-like and sensual, had appeared to him, who was filled with angelic love. The flesh had tempted him, who had lived on the ideal. He had heard words of voluptuousness like cries of rage; he had felt the clasp of a woman's arms, like the convolutions of a snake; to the illumination of truth had succeeded the fascination of falsehood; for it is not the flesh that is real, but the soul. The flesh is ashes the soul is flame. For the little circle allied to him by the relationship of poverty and toil, which was his true and natural family, had been substituted the social family—his family in blood, but of tainted blood; and even before he had entered it, he found himself face to face with an intended fratricide. Alas! he had allowed himself to be thrown back into that society, of which Brantôme, whom he had not read, wrote; *the son has a right to challenge his father!* A fatal fortune had cried to him, "Thou art not of the crowd. thou art of the chosen!" and had opened the ceiling above his head like a trap in the sky, and had shot him up through this opening, causing him to appear, wild and unexpected, in the midst of princes and masters.

Then suddenly he saw around him, instead of the people who applauded him, the lords who cursed him. Mournful metamorphosis! Ignominious ennobling! Rude spoilation of all that had been his happiness! Pillage of his life by derision; Gwynplaine, Clancharlie, the lord, the mountebank, torn out of his own lot, out of his new lot by the beaks of those eagles.

What availed it that he had commenced life by immediate victory over obstacle? Of what good had been his early triumphs? Alas! the fall must come, ere destiny be complete.

So, half against his will, half of it—because after he had done with the wapentake he had to do with Barkilphedro, and he had given a certain amount of consent to his abduction—he had left the real for the chimerical; the true for the false; Dea for Josiana; love for pride; liberty for power; labor proud and poor for opulence full of unknown responsibilities; the shade in which is God, for the lurid flames in which the devils dwell; Paradise for Olympus!

He had tasted the golden fruit. He was now spitting out the ashes to which it turned.

Lamentable result! Defeat, failure, fall into ruin, insolent expulsion of all his hopes, frustrated by ridicule. Immeasurable disillusion! and what was there for him in the future? If he looked forward to the morrow, what did he see? A drawn sword the point of which was against his breast, and the hilt in the hand of his brother. He could see nothing but the hideous flash of that sword. Josiana and the House of Lords made up the background in a monstrous chiar-oscuro full of tragic shadows.

And that brother seemed so brave and chivalrous! Alas! he had hardly seen the Tom-Jim-Jack, who had defended Gwynplaine, the Lord David, who had defended Lord Clancharlie; but he had had time to receive a blow from him and to love him.

He was crushed.

He felt it impossible to proceed further. Everything had crumbled about him. Besides, what was the good of it! All weariness dwells in the depths of despair.

The trial had been made. It could not be renewed.

Gwynplaine was like a gamester who has played all his trumps away, one after the other. He had allowed himself to be drawn

to a fearful gambling-table, without thinking what he was about; for, so subtle is the poison of illusion! he had staked Dea against Josiana, and had gained a monster; he had staked Ursus against a family, and had gained an insult; he had played his mountebank platform against his seat in the Lords; for the applause which was his, he had gained insult. His last card had fallen on that fatal green cloth, the deserted bowling green. Gwynplaine had lost. Nothing remained but to pay. Pay up, wretched man!

The thunder-stricken lie still. Gwynplaine remained motionless. Anybody perceiving him from afar, in the shadow, stiff and without movement, might have fancied that he saw an upright stone.

Hell, the serpent, and reverie are tortuous. Gwynplaine was descending the sepulchral spirals of the deepest thought.

He reflected on that world of which he had just caught a glimpse, with the icy contemplation of a last look. Marriage, but no love; family, but no brotherly affection; riches, but no conscience; beauty, but no modesty; justice, but no equity; order, but no equilibrium; authority, but no right; power, but no intelligence; splendor, but no light. Inexorable balance-sheet! He went throughout the supreme vision in which his mind had been plunged. He examined successively destiny, situation, society, and himself. What was destiny? A snare. Situation? Despair. Society? Hatred. And himself? A defeated man. In the depths of his soul he cried. Society is the stepmother, Nature is the mother. Society is the world of the body, Nature is the world of the soul. The one tends to the coffin, to the deal box in the grave, to the earth-worms, and ends there. The other tends to expanded wings, to transformation into the morning light, to ascent into the firmament, and there revives into new life.

By degrees a paroxysm came over him, like a sweeping surge. At the close of events there is always a last flash, in which all stands revealed once more.

He who judges meets the accused face to face. Gwynplaine reviewed all that society and all that nature had done for him. How kind had nature been to him! How she, who is the soul, had succored him! All had been taken from him, even his features. The soul had given him all back—all, even his

features; because there was on earth a heavenly blind girl made expressly for him, who saw not his ugliness, and who saw his beauty.

And it was from this that he had allowed himself to be separated; from that adorable girl, from his own adopted one, from her tenderness, from her divine blind gaze, the only gaze on earth that saw him, that he had strayed! Dea was his sister, because he felt between them the grand fraternity of above—the mystery which contains the whole of heaven. Dea, when he was a little child, was his virgin; because every child has his virgin, and at the commencement of life a marriage of souls is always consummated in the plenitude of innocence. Dea was his wife, for theirs was the same nest on the highest branch of the deep-rooted tree of Hymen. Dea was still more—she was his light, for without her all was void, and nothingness; and for him her head was crowned with rays. What would become of him without Dea? What could he do with all that was himself?—Nothing in him could live without her. How, then, could he have lost sight of her for a moment? Oh, unfortunate man! He allowed distance to intervene between himself and his star; and, by the unknown and terrible laws of gravitation in such things, distance is immediate loss.

Where was she, the star? Dea! Dea! Dea! Dea! Alas! he had lost her light. Take away the star, and what is the sky? A black mass. But why, then, had all this befallen him? Oh, what happiness had been his! For him God had remade Eden. Too close was the resemblance, alas! even to allowing the serpent to enter; but this time it was the man who had been tempted. He had been drawn without, and then, by a frightful snare, had fallen into a chaos of murky laughter, which was hell. Oh, grief! Oh, grief! How frightful seemed all that had fascinated him! That Josiana, fearful creature!—half beast, half goddess! Gwynplaine was now on the reverse side of his elevation, and he saw the other aspect of that which had dazzled him. It was baleful! His peerage was deformed; his coronet was hideous; his purple robe, a funeral garment; those palaces, infected; those trophies, those statues, those armorial bearings, sinister; the unwholesome and treacherous air poisoned those who breathed it, and turned them mad.

How brilliant the rags of the mountebank, Gwynplaine, appeared to him now! Alas! where was the Green Box, poverty, joy, the sweet wandering life—wandering together, like the swallows? They never left each other then; he saw her every minute, morning, evening. At table their knees, their elbows, touched; they drank from the same cup; the sun shone through the pane, but it was only the sun, and Dea was Love. At night they slept not far from each other; and the dream of Dea came and hovered over Gwynplaine, and the dream of Gwynplaine spread itself mysteriously above the head of Dea. When they awoke they could be never quite sure that they had not exchanged kisses in the azure mists of dreams. Dea was all innocence; Ursus, all wisdom. They wandered from town to town; and they had for provision and for stimulant the frank, loving gayety of the people. They were angel vagabonds, with enough of humanity to walk the earth and not enough of wings to fly away; and now all had disappeared! Where was it gone? Was it possible that it was all effaced? What wind from the tomb had swept over them? All was eclipsed! All was lost! Alas! power, irresistible and deaf to appeal, which weighs down the poor, flings its shadow over all, and is capable of anything. What had been done to them? And he had not been there to protect them, to fling himself in front of them, to defend them, as a lord, with his title, his peerage, and his sword; as a mountebank, with his fists and his nails!

And here rose a bitter reflection, perhaps the most bitter of all. Well! no; he could not have defended them. It was he himself who had destroyed them; it was to save him, Lord Clancharlie, from them; it was to isolate his dignity from contact with them, that the infamous omnipotence of society had crushed them. The best way in which he could protect them would be to disappear, and then the cause of their persecution would cease. He out of the way, they would be allowed to remain in peace. Into what icy channel was his thought beginning to run! Oh! why had he allowed himself to be separated from Dea? Was not his first duty towards her? To serve and to defend the people? But Dea was the people, Dea was an orphan. She was blind; she represented humanity. Oh! what had they done to them? Cruel smart of regret! His ab-



sence had left the field free for the catastrophe. He would have shared their fate; either they would have been taken and carried away with him, or he would have been swallowed up with them. And, now, what would become of him without them? Gwynplaine without Dea. Was it possible? Without Dea was to be without everything. It was all over now. The beloved group was for ever buried in irreparable disappearance. All was spent. Besides, condemned and damned as Gwynplaine, what was the good of further struggle? He had nothing more to expect either of men or of heaven. Dea! Dea! Where is Dea? Lost! What! lost? He who has lost his soul can regain it but through one outlet—death.

Gwynplaine, tragically distraught, placed his hand firmly on the parapet as on a solution, and looked at the river.

It was his third night without sleep. Fever had come over him. His thoughts, which he believed to be clear, were blurred. He felt an imperative need of sleep. He remained for a few instants, leaning over the water. Its darkness offered him a bed of boundless tranquillity in the infinity of shadow, Sinister temptation.

He took off his coat, which he folded and placed on the parapet; then, he unbuttoned his waistcoat. As he was about to take it off, his hand struck against something in the pocket. It was the red book which had been given him by the librarian of the House of Lords; he drew it from the pocket, examined it in the vague light of the night, and found a pencil in it, with which he wrote on the first blank that he found these two lines:—

“I depart. Let my brother David take my place, and may he be happy!”

Then he signed, “Fermain Clancharlie, peer of England.”

He took off his waistcoat and placed it upon the coat; then his hat, which he placed upon the waistcoat. In the hat he laid the red book open at the page on which he had written. Seeing a stone lying on the ground, he picked it up and placed it in the hat. Having done all this, he looked up into the deep shadow above him. Then his head sank slowly, as if drawn by an invisible thread towards the abyss.

There was a hole in the masonry near the base of the parapet; he placed his foot in it, so that his knee stood higher than the top,

and scarcely an effort was necessary to spring over it. He clasped his hands behind his back and leaned over. “So be it,” said he.

And he fixed his eyes on the deep waters. Just then he felt a tongue licking his hands.

He shuddered, and turned round,

Homo was behind him.

## CONCLUSION.

### THE NIGHT AND THE SEA.

#### CHAPTER I.

A WATCH-DOG MAY BE A GUARDIAN ANGEL.

GWYNPLAINE uttered a cry.

“Is that you, wolf!”

Homo wagged his tail. His eyes sparkled in the darkness. He was looking earnestly at Gwynplaine.

Then he began to lick his hands again. For a moment Gwynplaine was like a drunken man, so great is the shock of Hope’s mighty return.

Homo! What an apparition! During the last forty-eight hours he had exhausted what might be termed every variety of the thunder-bolt. But one was left to strike him—the thunder-bolt of joy. And it had just fallen upon him. Certainly, or at least the light which leads to it, regained; the sudden intervention of some mysterious clemency possessed, perhaps, by destiny; life saying, “Behold me!” in the darkest recess of the grave; the very moment in which all expectation has ceased bringing back health and deliverance; a place of safety discovered at the most critical instant in the midst of crumbling ruins; Homo was all this to Gwynplaine. The wolf appeared to him in a halo of light.

Meanwhile, Homo had turned round. He advanced a few steps, and then looked back to see if Gwynplaine was following him.

Gwynplaine was doing so. Homo wagged his tail, and went on.

The road taken by the wolf was the slope of the quay of the Effroc stone. This slope shelved down to the Thames; and Gwynplaine, guided by Homo, descended it.

Homo turned his head now and then, to make sure that Gwynplaine was behind him.

In some situations of supreme importance nothing approaches so near an omniscient in-

telligence as the simple instinct of a faithful animal. An animal is a lucid somnambulist.

There are cases in which the dog feels that he should follow his master; others, in which he should precede him. Then the animal takes the direction of sense. His imperturbable scent is a confused power of vision in what is twilight to us. He feels a vague obligation to become a guide. Does he know that there is a dangerous pass, and that he can help his master to surmount it? Probably not. Perhaps he does. In any case, someone knows it for him. As we have already said, it often happens in life, that some mighty help which we have held to have come from below has, in reality, come from above. Who knows all the mysterious forms assumed by God?

What was this animal? Providence.

Having reached the river, the wolf led down the narrow tongue of land which bordered the Thames.

Without noise or bark he pushed forward on his silent way. Homo always followed his instinct, and did his duty; but with the pensive reserve of an outlaw.

Some fifty paces more, and he stopped. A wooden platform appeared on the right. At the bottom of this platform, which was a kind of wharf on piles, a black mass could be made out, which was a tolerably large vessel. On the deck of the vessel, near the prow, was a glimmer, like the last flicker of a nightlight.

The wolf, having finally assured himself that Gwynplaine was there, bounded on to the wharf. It was a long platform, floored and tarred, supported by a network of joists, and under which flowed the river. Homo and Gwynplaine shortly reached the brink.

The ship moored to the wharf was a Dutch vessel, of the Japanese build, with two decks, fore and aft, and between them an open hold, reached by an upright ladder, in which the cargo was laden. There was thus a fore-castle and an afterdeck, as in our old river boats, and a space between them ballasted by the freight. The paper boats made by children are of a somewhat similar shape. Under the decks were the cabins, the doors of which opened into the hold and were lighted by glazed port-holes. In stowing the cargo a passage was left between the packages of which it consisted. These vessels had a mast on each deck. The foremast was called Paul, the mainmast Peter; the ship

being sailed by these two masts, as the Church was guided by her two apostles. A gangway was thrown, like a Chinese bridge, from one deck to the other, over the centre of the hold. In bad weather, both flaps of the gangway were lowered, on the right and left, on hinges, thus making a roof over the hold; so that the ship, in heavy seas, was hermetically closed. These sloops, being of very massive construction, had a beam for a tiller, the strength of the rudder being necessarily proportioned to the height of the vessel. Three men, the skipper and two sailors, with a cabin-boy, sufficed to navigate these ponderous sea-going machines. The decks, fore and aft, were, as we have already said, without bulwarks. The great lumbering hull of this particular vessel was painted black, and on it, visible even in night, stood out, in white letters, the words, *Vogruat, Rotterdam*.

About that time many events had occurred at sea, and amongst others, the defeat of the Baron de Pointi's eight ships off Cape Carnero, which had driven the whole French fleet into refuge at Gibraltar; so that the channel was swept by every man-of-war, and merchant vessels were able to sail backwards and forwards between London and Rotterdam, without a convoy.

The vessel on which was to be read the word *Vogruat*, and which Gwynplaine was now close to, lay with her main-deck almost level with the wharf. But one step to descend, and Homo in a bound, and Gwynplaine in a stride, were on board.

The deck was clear, and no stir was perceptible. The passengers, if, as was likely, there were any, were already on board, the vessel being ready to sail, and the cargo stowed, as was apparent from the state of the hold, which was full of bales and cases. But they were, doubtless, lying asleep in the cabins below, as the passage was to take place during the night. In such cases the passengers do not appear on deck till they awake the following morning. As for the crew, they were probably having their supper in the men's cabin, whilst awaiting the hour fixed for sailing, which was now rapidly approaching. Hence the silence on the two decks connected by the gangway.

The wolf had almost run across the wharf; once on board, he slackened his pace into a discreet walk. He still wagged his tail—no

longer joyfully, however; but with the sad and feeble wag of a dog troubled in his mind. Still preceding Gwynplaine, he passed along the after-deck, and across the gangway.

Gwynplaine, having reached the gangway, perceived a light in front of him. It was the same that he had seen from the shore. There was a lantern on the deck, close to the foremast, by the gleam of which was sketched in black, on the dim background of the night, what Gwynplaine recognized to be Ursus's old four-wheeled van.

This poor wooden tenement, cart and hut combined, in which his childhood had rolled along, was fastened to the bottom of the mast by thick ropes, of which the knots were visible at the wheels. Having been so long out of service, it had become dreadfully rickety; it leant over feebly on one side; it had become quite paralytic from disuse; and moreover, it was suffering from that incurable malady—old age. Mouldy and out of shape, it tottered in decay. The materials of which it was built were all rotten. The iron was rusty, the leather torn, the wood-work worm-eaten. There were lines of cracks across the window in front, through which shone a ray from the lantern. The wheels were warped. The lining, the floor, and the axletrees seemed worn out with fatigue. Altogether, it presented an indescribable appearance of beggary and prostration. The shafts, stuck up, looked like the two arms raised to heaven. The whole thing was in a state of dislocation. Beneath it was hanging Homo's chain.

Does it not seem that the law and the will of nature would have dictated Gwynplaine's headlong rush to throw himself upon life, happiness, love regained? So they would, except in some case of deep terror such as his. But he who comes forth, shattered in nerve and uncertain of his way, from a series of catastrophes, each one like a fresh betrayal, is prudent even in his joy; hesitates, lest he should bear the fatality of which he has been the victim to those whom he loves; feels that some evil contagion may still hang about him, and advances towards happiness with wary steps. The gates of Paradise re-open; but before he enters he examines his ground.

Gwynplaine, staggering under the weight of his emotion, looked around him, while the wolf went and lay down silently by his chain.

## CHAPTER II.

BARKILPHEDRO, HAVING AIMED AT THE EAGLE, BRINGS DOWN THE DOVE.

THE step of the little van was down—the door ajar—there was no one inside. The faint light which broke through the pane in front, sketched the interior of the caravan vaguely in melancholy chiar-oscuro. The inscriptions of Ursus, glorifying the grandeur of Lords, showed distinctly on the worn-out boards, which were both the wall without and the wainscot within. On a nail, near the door, Gwynplaine saw his esclavine and his cape hung up, as they hang up the clothes of a corpse in a dead-house. Just then he had neither waistcoat nor coat on.

Behind the van something was laid out on the deck at the foot of the mast, which was lighted by the lantern. It was a mattress, of which he could make out one corner. On this mattress some one was probably lying, for he could see a shadow move.

Some one was speaking. Concealed by the van, Gwynplaine listened. It was Ursus' voice. That voice, so harsh in its upper, so tender in its lower, pitch; that voice which had so often upbraided Gwynplaine, and which had taught him so well, had lost the life and clearness of its tone. It was vague and low, and melted into a sigh at the end of every sentence. It bore but a confused resemblance to his natural and firm voice of old. It was the voice of one in whom happiness is dead. A voice may become a ghost.

He seemed to be engaged in monologue rather than in conversation. We are already aware, however, that soliloquy was a habit with him. It was for that reason that he passed for a madman.

Gwynplaine held his breath, so as not to lose a word of what Ursus said, and this was what he heard.

"This is a very dangerous kind of craft, because there are no bulwarks to it. If we were to slip, there is nothing to prevent our going overboard. If we have bad weather, we shall have to take her below, and that will be dreadful. An awkward step, a fright, and we shall have a rupture of the aneurism. I have seen instances of it. O my God! what is to become of us? Is she asleep? Yes. She is asleep. Is she in a swoon? No. Her pulse is pretty strong. She is only

asleep. Sleep is a reprieve. It is the happy blindness. What can I do to prevent people walking about here? Gentlemen, if there is anybody on deck, I beg of you to make no noise. Do not come near us, if you do not mind. You know a person in delicate health requires a little attention. She is feverish, you see. She is very young. 'Tis a little creature who is rather feverish. I put this mattress down here so that she may have a little air. I explain all this so that you should be careful. She fell down exhausted on the mattress as if she had fainted. But she is asleep. I do hope that no one will awake her. I address myself to the ladies, if there are any present. A young girl, it is pitiful! We are only poor mountebanks, but I beg a little kindness, and if there is anything to pay for not making a noise, I will pay it. I thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Is there any one there? No. I don't think there is. My talk is mere loss of breath. So much the better. Gentlemen, I thank you, if you are there; and I thank you still more if you are not. Her forehead is all in perspiration. Come, let us take our places in the galleys again. Put on the chain. Misery is come back. We are sinking again. A hand, the fearful hand which we cannot see, but the weight of which we feel ever upon us, has suddenly struck us back towards the dark point of our destiny. Be it so. We will bear up. Only I will not have her ill. I must seem a fool to talk aloud like this, when I am alone; but she must feel she has some one near her when she awakes. What shall I do if somebody awakes her suddenly! No noise, in the name of heaven! A sudden shock which would awake her suddenly, would be of no use. It will be a pity if anybody comes by. I believe that every one on board is asleep. Thanks be to Providence for that mercy. Well, and Homo? Where is he, I wonder? In all this confusion I forgot to tie him up. I do not know what I am doing. It is more than an hour since I have seen him. I suppose he has been to look for his supper somewhere ashore. I hope nothing has happened to him. Homo! Homo!"

Homo struck his tail softly on the planks of the deck.

"You are there. Oh! you are there! Thank God for that. If Homo had been lost, it would have been too much to bear. She has moved her arm. Perhaps she is go-

ing to awake. Quiet, Homo! The tide is turning. We shall sail directly. I think it will be a fine night. There is no wind: the flag droops. We shall have a good passage. I do not know what moon it is, but there is scarcely a stir in the clouds. There will be no swell. It will be a fine night. Her cheek is pale; it is only weakness! No, it is flushed; it is only the fever? Stay! It is rosy. She is well! I can no longer see clearly. My poor Homo, I no longer see distinctly. So we must begin life afresh. We must set to work again. There are only we two left, you see. We will work for her, both of us! She is our child. Ah! the vessel moves! We are off! Good-bye, London! Good evening! good night! To the devil with horrible London!"

He was right. He heard the dull sound of the unmooring as the vessel fell away from the wharf. Aft on the poop a man, the skipper, no doubt, just come from below, was standing. He had slipped the hawser, and was working the tiller. Looking only to the rudder, as befitted the combined phlegm of a Dutchman and a sailor, listening to nothing but the wind and the water, bending against the resistance of the tiller, as he worked it to port or starboard, he looked in the gloom of the after-deck, like a phantom bearing a beam upon its shoulder. He was alone there. So long as they were in the river the other sailors were not required. In a few minutes the vessel was in the centre of the current, with which she drifted without rolling or pitching. The Thames, little disturbed by the ebb, was calm. Carried onwards by the tide, the vessel made rapid way. Behind her the black scenery of London was fading in the mist.

Ursus went on talking.

"Never mind, I will give her digitalis. I am afraid that delirium will supervene. She perspires in the palms of her hands. What sin can we have committed in the sight of God? How quickly has all this misery come upon us! Hideous rapidity of evil! A stone falls. It has claws. It is the hawk swooping down on the lark. It is destiny. There you lie, my sweet child! One comes to London. One says: What a fine city! What fine buildings! Southwark is a magnificent suburb. One settles there. But now they are horrid places. What would you have me do there? I am going to leave. This is the

30th of April. I always distrusted the month of April. There are but two lucky days in April, the 5th and the 27th; and four unlucky ones—the 10th, the 20th, the 29th, and the 30th. This has been placed beyond doubt by the calculations of Cardan. I wish this day were over. Departure is a comfort. At dawn we shall be at Gravesend, and to-morrow evening at Rotterdam. Zounds! I will begin life again in the van. We will draw it, won't we, Homo?"

A light tapping announced the wolf's consent.

Ursus continued :—

"If one could only get out of a grief, as one gets out of a city! Homo, we must yet be happy. Alas! there must always be the one who is no more. A shadow remains on those who survive. You know whom I mean, Homo. We were four, and now we are but three. Life is but a long loss of those whom we love. They leave behind them a train of sorrows. Destiny amazes us by a prolixity of unbearable suffering; who then can wonder that the old are garrulous! It is despair that makes the dotard, old fellow! Homo, the wind continues favorable. We can no longer see the dome of St. Paul's. We shall pass Greenwich presently. That will be six good miles over. Oh! I turn my back for ever on those odious capitals, full of priests, of magistrates, and of people. I prefer looking at the leaves rustling in the woods. Her forehead is still in perspiration. I don't like those great violet veins in her arm. There is fever in them. Oh! all this is killing me. Sleep, my child. Yes; she sleeps."

Here a voice spoke: an ineffable voice, which seemed from afar, and appeared to come at once from the heights and the depths—a voice divine fearful, the voice of Dea.

All that Gwynplaine had hitherto felt seemed nothing. His angel spoke. It seemed as though he had heard words spoken from another world in a heaven-like trance.

The voice said :—

"He did well to go. This world was not worthy of him. Only I must go with him. Father! I am not ill; I heard you speak just now. I am very well, quite well. I was asleep. Father, I am going to be happy."

"My child," said Ursus, in a voice of anguish; "what do you mean by that?"

The answer was,—

"Father, do not be unhappy."

There was a pause, as if to take breath, and then these few words, pronounced slowly, reached Gwynplaine.

"Gwynplaine is no longer here. It is now that I am blind. I knew not what night was. Night is absence."

The voice stopped once more, and then continued,—

"I always feared that he would fly away. I felt that he belonged to Heaven. He has taken flight suddenly. It was natural that it should end thus. The soul flies away like a bird. But the nest of the soul is in the height, where dwells the Great Loadstone, who draws all towards Him. I know where to find Gwynplaine. I have no doubt about the way. Father, it is yonder. Later on you will rejoice us, and Homo, too."

Homo, hearing his name pronounced, wagged his tail softly against the deck.

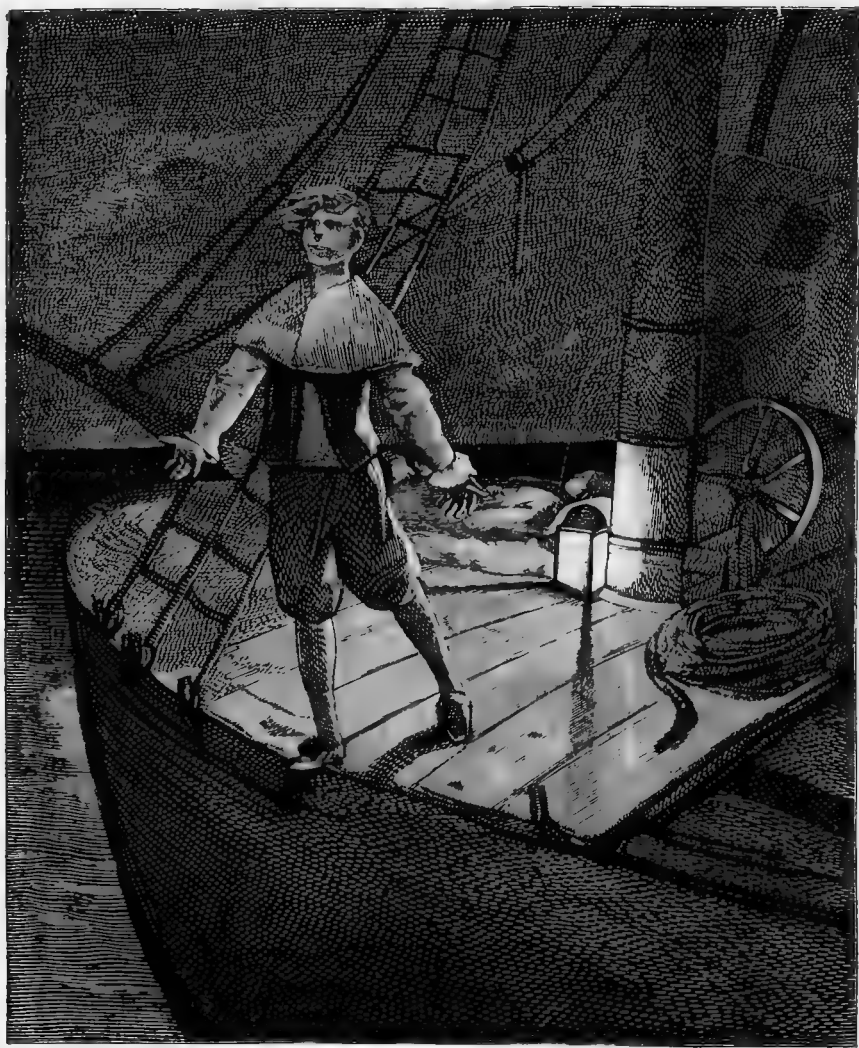
"Father!" resumed the voice, "you understand that once Gwynplaine is no longer here, all is over. Even if I would remain, I could not, because one must breathe. We must not ask for that which is impossible. I was with Gwynplaine. It was quite natural, I lived. Now Gwynplaine is no more, I die. The two things are alike: either he must come, or I must go. Since he cannot come back, I am going to him. It is good to die. It is not at all difficult. Father, that which is extinguished here, shall be re-kindled elsewhere. It is a heartache to live in this world. It cannot be that we shall always be unhappy. When we go to what you call the stars, we shall marry, we shall never part again, and we shall love, love, love; and that is what is God."

"There, there, do not agitate yourself," said Ursus.

The voice continued,—

"Well, for instance; last year. In the spring of last year we were together, and we were happy. How different it is now! I forget what little village we were in, but there were trees, and I heard the linnets singing. We came to London; all was changed. This is no reproach, mind. When one comes to a fresh place, how is one to know anything about it? Father, do you remember that one day there was a woman in the great box; you said: 'It is a duchess.' I felt sad. I think it might have been better had we kept





"I COME," SAID HE, "DEA, BEHOLD I COME!"

Hugo, vol. III., p. 493.

to the little towns. Gwynplaine has done right, withal. Now my turn has come. Besides, you have told me yourself, that when I was very little, my mother died, and that I was lying on the ground with the snow falling upon me, and that he, who was also very little then, and alone, like myself, picked me up, and that it was thus that I came to be alive; so you cannot wonder that now I should feel it absolutely necessary to go and search the grave to see if Gwynplaine be in it. Because the only thing which exists in life, is the heart; and after life, the soul. You take notice of what I say, father, do you not? What is moving? It seems as if we are in something that is moving, yet I do not hear the sound of the wheels."

After a pause the voice added,—

"I cannot exactly make out the difference between yesterday and to-day. I do not complain. I do not know what has occurred; but something must have happened.

These words, uttered with deep and inextinguishable sweetness, and with a sigh which Gwynplaine heard, wound up thus,—

"I must go, unless he should return."

Ursus muttered gloomily; "I do not believe in ghosts."

He went on,—

"This is a ship. You ask why the house moves, it is because we are on board a vessel. Be calm; you must not talk so much. Daughter, if you have any love for me, do not agitate yourself, it will make you feverish. I am so old, I could not bear it if you were to have an illness. Spare me! do not be ill!

Again the voice spoke,—

"What is the use of searching the earth, when we can only find in Heaven?"

Ursus replied, with a half attempt of authority,—

"Be calm. There are times when you have no sense at all. I order you to rest. After all, you cannot be expected to know what it is to rupture a blood-vessel. I should be easy if you were easy. My child, do something for me as well. If he picked you up, I took you in. You will make me ill. That is wrong. You must calm yourself, and go to sleep. All will come right. I give you my word of honor, all will come right. Besides, it is very fine weather. The night might have been made on purpose. Tomorrow we shall be at Rotterdam, which is a city in Holland, at the mouth of the Meuse."

"Father," said the voice, "look here; when two beings have always been together from infancy, their state should not be disturbed, or death must come, and it cannot be otherwise. I love you all the same, but I feel that I am no longer altogether with you, although I am as yet not altogether with him."

"Come! try to sleep," repeated Ursus.

The voice answered,—

"I shall have sleep enough soon."

Ursus replied in trembling tones,—

"I tell you that we are going to Holland, to Rotterdam, which is a city."

"Father," continued the voice, "I am not ill; if you are anxious about that, you may rest easy. I have no fever. I am rather hot; it is nothing more."

Ursus stammered out,—

"At the mouth of the Meuse—"

"I am quite well, father; but look here. I feel that I am going to die!"

"Do nothing so foolish," said Ursus. And he added, "Above all, God forbid she should have a shock!"

There was a silence. Suddenly Ursus cried out,—

"What are you doing? Why are you getting up? Lie down again, I implore of you."

Gwynplaine shivered, and stretched out his head.

### CHAPTER III.

#### PARADISE REGAINED BELOW.

HE saw Dea. She had just raised herself up on the mattress. She had on a long white dress, carefully closed, and showing only the delicate form of her neck. The sleeves covered her arms, the folds, her feet. The branch-like tracery of blue veins, hot and swollen with fever, were visible on her hands. She was shivering and rocking, rather than reeling, to and fro, like a reed. The lantern threw up its glancing light on her beautiful face. Her loosened hair floated over her shoulders. No tears fell on her cheeks. In her eyes there was fire, and darkness. She was pale, with that paleness which is like the transparency of a divine life in an earthly face. Her fragile and exquisite form was, as it were, blended and interfused with the folds of her robe. She wavered like the



flicker of a flame, while, at the same time, she was dwindling into shadow. Her eyes, opened wide, were resplendent. She was as one just freed from the sepulchre; a soul standing in the dawn.

Ursus, whose back only was visible to Gwynplaine, raised his arms in terror. "Oh! my child! Oh! heavens she is delirious. Delirium is what I feared worst of all. She must have no shock, for that might kill her; yet nothing but a shock can prevent her going mad. Dead or mad! what a situation. O God! what can I do? My child, lie down again."

Meanwhile, Dea spoke. Her voice was almost indistinct, as if a cloud already interposed between her and earth.

"Father, you are wrong. I am not in the least delirious. I hear all you say to me, distinctly. You tell me that there is a great crowd of people, that they are waiting, and that I must play to-night. I am quite willing. You see that I have my reason; but I do not know what to do, since I am dead, and Gwynplaine is dead. I am coming all the same. I am ready to play. Here I am; but Gwynplaine is no longer here."

"Come, my child," said Ursus, "do as I bid you. Lie down again."

"He is no longer here, no longer here. Oh! how dark it is!"

"Dark," muttered Ursus. "This is the first time she has ever uttered that word!"

Gwynplaine, with as little noise as he could help making as he crept, mounted the step of the caravan, entered it, took from the nail the cape and the esclavine; put the esclavine round his neck, and redescended from the van, still concealed by the projection of the cabin, the rigging, and the mast.

Dea continued murmuring. She moved her lips, and by degrees the murmur became a melody. In broken pauses, and with the interrupted cadences of delirium, her voice broke into the mysterious appeal she had so often addressed to Gwynplaine in *Chaos Vanquished*. She sang, and her voice was low and uncertain as the murmur of the bee,

"Noche, quita te de alli,  
El alba canta . . . ."

She stopped. "No, it is not true. I am not dead. What was I saying? Alas! I am alive. I am alive. He is dead. I am below.

\* "Depart, O night! sings the dawn."

He is above. He is gone. I remain. I shall hear his voice no more, nor his footstep. God, who had given us a little Paradise on earth, has taken it away. Gwynplaine, it is over. I shall never feel you near me again. Never! And his voice! I shall never hear his voice again. And she sang:

"Es menester a cielos ir—  
Deja, quiero,  
A tu negro  
Caparazon."

"We must go to heaven.  
Take off, I entreat thee,  
Thy black cloak."

She stretched out her hand, as if she sought something in space on which she might rest.

Gwynplaine, rising by the side of Ursus, who had suddenly become as though petrified, knelt down before her.

"Never," said Dea, "never shall I hear him again."

She began, wandering, to sing again,

"Deja, quiero,  
A tu negro  
Caparazon."

Then she heard a voice—even the beloved voice—answering,

"O ven! ama!  
Eres alma,  
Soy corazon."

"O come and love  
Thou art the soul,  
I am the heart."

And at the same instant Dea felt under her hand the head of Gwynplaine. She uttered an indescribable cry.

"Gwynplaine!"

A light, as of a star shone over her pale face, and she tottered. Gwynplaine received her in his arms.

"Alive!" cried Ursus.

Dea repeated "Gwynplaine;" and with her head bowed against Gwynplaine's cheek, she whispered faintly,

"You have come down to me again; I thank you, Gwynplaine."

And seated on his knee, she lifted up her head. Wrapt in his embrace, she turned her sweet face towards him, and fixed on him those eyes so full of light and shadow, as though she could see him.

"It is you," she said.

Gwynplaine covered her sobs with kisses. There are words which are at once words,

cries, and sobs, in which all ecstasy and all grief are mingled and burst forth together. They have no meaning, and yet tell all.

"Yes! it is! It is I, Gwynplaine, of whom you are the soul. Do you hear me? I, of whom you are the child, the wife, the star, the breath of life. I, to whom you are eternity. It is I. I am here. I hold you in my arms. I am alive. I am yours. Oh! when I think that in a moment all would have been over—one minute more, but for Homo. I will tell you everything. How near is despair to joy! Dea, we live! Dea, forgive me. Yes. Yours for ever. You are right. Touch my forehead. Make sure that it is I. If you only knew—but nothing can separate us now. I rise out of hell, and ascend into heaven. Am I not with you? You said that I descended. Not so; I reascend. Once more with you! For ever! I tell you for ever. Together! We are together! Who would have believed it? We have found each other again. All our troubles are past. Before us now there is nothing but enchantment. We will renew our happy life, and we will shut the door so fast that misfortune shall never enter again. I will tell you all. You will be astonished. The vessel has sailed. No one can prevent that now. We are on our voyage, and at liberty. We are going to Holland. We will marry. I have no fear about gaining a livelihood. What can hinder it? There is nothing to fear. I adore you!"

"Not so quick!" stammered Ursus.

Dea, trembling, and with the rapture of an angelic touch, passed her hand over Gwynplaine's profile. He overheard her say to herself, "It is thus that gods are made."

Then she touched his clothes.

"The esclavine," she said, "the cape. Nothing changed. All as it was before."

Ursus, stupefied, delighted, smiling, drowned in tears, looked at them, and addressed an aside to himself.

"I don't understand it in the least. I am a stupid idiot—I, who saw him carried to the grave! I cry, and I laugh. That is all I know. I am as great a fool as if I were in love myself. But that is just what I am. I am in love with them both. Old fool! Too much emotion. Too much emotion. It is what I was afraid of. No, it is that I wished for. Gwynplaine, be careful of her. Yes, let them kiss! it is no affair of mine. I am

but a spectator. What I feel is droll. I am the parasite of their happiness, and I am nourished by it."

Whilst Ursus was talking to himself, Gwynplaine exclaimed—

"Dea, you are too beautiful! I don't know where my wits were gone these last few days. Truly, there is but you on earth. I see you again, but as yet I can hardly believe it. In this ship! But tell me, how did it all happen? To what a state have they reduced you. But where is the Green Box? They have robbed you. They have driven you away. It is infamous. Oh! I will avenge you. I will avenge you, Dea. They shall answer for it. I am a peer of England."

Ursus, as if stricken by a planet full in his breast, drew back, and looked at Gwynplaine attentively,

"It is clear that he is not dead; but can he have gone mad?" and he listened to him doubtfully.

Gwynplaine resumed.

"Be easy, Dea; I will carry my complaint to the House of Lords."

Ursus looked at him again, and struck his forehead with the tip of his forefinger. Then making up his mind—

"It is all one to me," he said, "It will be all right, all the same. Be as mad as you like, my Gwynplaine. It is one of the rights of man. As for me; I am happy; but how came all this about."

The vessel continued to sail smoothly and fast. The night grew darker and darker. The mists, which came inland from the ocean, were invading the zenith, from which no wind blew them away. Only a few large stars were visible, and they disappeared one after another, so that soon there were none at all, and the whole sky was dark, infinite, and soft. The river broadened until the banks on each side were nothing but two thin brown lines mingling with the gloom. Out of all this shadow rose a profound peace. Gwynplaine, half seated, held Dea in his embrace. They spoke, they cried, they babbled, they murmured in a mad dialogue of joy! How are we to paint thee, O joy!

"My life!"

"My heaven!"

"My love!"

"My whole happiness!"

"Gwynplaine!"

"Dea, I am drunk. Let me kiss your feet."

"Is it you then for certain!"

"I have so much to say to you now that I do not know where to begin."

"One kiss!"

"O, my wife!"

"Gwynplaine, do not tell me that I am beautiful. It is you who are handsome."

"I have found you again. I hold you to my heart. This is true. You are mine. I do not dream. Is it possible? Yes, it is. I recover possession of life. If you only knew! I have met with all sorts of adventures. Dea!"

"Gwynplaine, I love you!"

And Ursus murmured,—

"Mine is the joy of a grandfather."

Homo, having come from under the van, was going from one to the other discreetly, exacting no attention, licking them left and right—now Ursus's thick shoes, now Gwynplaine's cap, now Dea's dress, now the mattress. This was his way of giving his blessing.

They had passed Chatham and the mouth of the Medway. They were approaching the sea. The shadowy serenity of the atmosphere was such that the passage down the Thames was being made without trouble: no manœuvre was needful, nor was any sailor called on deck. At the other end of the vessel the skipper, still alone, was steering. There was only this man aft. At the bow the lantern lighted up the happy group of beings who, from the depths of misery, had suddenly been raised to happiness by a meeting so unhopèd-for.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### NAY; ON HIGH!

SUDDENLY Dea, disengaging herself from Gwynplaine's embrace, arose. She pressed both her hands against her heart, as if to still its throbbings.

"What is wrong with me?" said she. "There is something the matter. Joy is suffocating. No, it is nothing! That is lucky. Your reappearance, O my Gwynplaine, has given me a blow—a blow of happiness. All this heaven of joy which you have put into my heart has intoxicated me. You being absent, I felt myself dying. The true life which was leaving me you have brought back. I felt as if something was being torn away

within me. It is the shadows that have been torn away, and I feel life dawn in my brain—a glowing life, a life of fever and delight. This life which you have just given me is wonderful. It is so heavenly, that it makes me suffer somewhat. It seems as though my soul is enlarged, and can scarcely be contained in my body. This life of seraphim, this plenitude, flows into my brain, and penetrates it. I feel like a beating of wings within my breast. I feel strangely, but happy. Gwynplaine, you have been my resurrection."

She flushed, became pale, then flushed again, and fell.

"Alas!" said Ursus, "you have killed her."

Gwynplaine stretched his arms towards Dea. Extremity of anguish coming upon extremity of ecstasy, what a shock! He would himself have fallen, had he not had to support her.

"Dea!" he cried shuddering, "what is the matter?"

"Nothing," said she, "I love you!"

She lay in his arms, lifeless, like a piece of linen; her hands were hanging down helplessly.

Gwynplaine and Ursus placed Dea on the mattress. She said feebly,—

"I cannot breathe lying down."

They lifted her up.

Ursus said,—

"Fetch a pillow."

She replied,—

"What for? I have Gwynplaine!"

She laid her head on Gwynplaine's shoulder, who was sitting behind, and supporting her, his eyes wild with grief.

"Oh," said she, "how happy I am!"

Ursus took her by the wrist, and counted the pulsation of the artery. He did not shake his head. He said nothing, nor expressed his thought except by the rapid movement of his eyelids, which were opening and closing convulsively, as if to prevent a flood of tears from bursting out.

"What is the matter?" asked Gwynplaine.

Ursus placed his ear against Dea's left side.

Gwynplaine repeated his question eagerly, fearful of the answer.

Ursus looked at Gwynplaine, then at Dea. He was livid. He said,—

"We ought to be parallel with Canterbury.

The distance from here to Gravesend cannot be very great. We shall have fine weather all night. We need fear no attack at sea, because the fleets are all on the coast of Spain. We shall have a good passage."

Dea, bent, and growing paler and paler, clutched her robe convulsively. She heaved a sigh of inexpressible sadness, and murmured,—

"I know what this is ; I am dying !"

Gwynplaine rose in terror. Ursus held Dea.

"Die ! you die ! No ; it shall not be ! You cannot die. Die now ! Die at once ! It is impossible. God is not ferociously cruel—to give you and to take you back in the same moment. No ; such things cannot be. It would make one doubt in Him. Then, indeed, would everything be a snare—the earth, the sky, the cradles of infants, the human heart, love, the stars. God would be a traitor, and man a dupe. There would be nothing in which to believe. It would be an insult to the creation. Everything would be an abyss. You know not what you say, Dea. You shall live ! I command you to live ! You must obey me ! I am your husband and your master, I forbid you to leave me ! Oh, heavens ! Oh, wretched Man ! No, it cannot be ; I to remain in the world after you ! Why it is as monstrous as that there should be no sun ! Dea ! Dea ! recover ! It is but a moment of passing pain. One feels a shudder at times, and thinks no more about it. It is absolutely necessary that you should get well and cease to suffer. *You die !* What have I done to you ! The very thought of it drives me mad. We belong to each other, and we love each other. You have no reason for going ! It would be unjust ! Have I committed crimes ? Besides, you have forgiven me. Oh, you would not make me desperate—have me become a villain, a madman, drive me to perdition ? Dea, I entreat you ? I conjure you ! I supplicate you ! Do not die !"

And clenching his hands in his hair, agonized with fear, stifled with tears, he threw himself at her feet.

"My Gwynplaine," said Dea, "it is no fault of mine !"

There then rose to her lips a red froth, which Ursus wiped away with the fold of her robe, before Gwynplaine, who was prostrate at her feet, could see it.

Gwynplaine took her feet in his hands, and

implored her in all kinds of confused words !

"I tell you, I will not have it. *You die ?* I have no strength left to bear it. Die ? Yes ; but both of us together—not otherwise. *You die, my Dea ?* I will never consent to it ! My divinity ! my love ! Do you understand that I am with you ? I swear that you shall live ! Oh, but you cannot have thought what would become of me after you were gone. If you had an idea of the necessity which you are to me ; you would see that it is absolutely impossible ! Dea ! you see I have but you ! The most extraordinary things have happened to me. You will hardly believe that I have just explored the whole of life in a few hours ! I have found out one thing—that there is nothing in it ! You exist ! if you did not, the universe would have no meaning. Stay with me ! Have pity on me ! Since you love me, live on ! If I have just found you again, it is to keep you. Wait a little longer ; you cannot leave me like this, now that we have been together but a few minutes ! Do not be impatient ! Oh, Heaven, how I suffer ! You are not angry with me, are you ? You know that I could not help going when the wapentake came for me. You will breathe more easily presently, you will see. Dea, all has been put right. We are going to be happy. Do not drive me to despair, Dea ! I have done nothing to you !"

These words were not spoken, but sobbed out. They rose from his breast—now in a lament which might have attracted the dove, now in a roar which might have made lions recoil.

Dea, answered him in a voice growing weaker and weaker, and pausing at nearly every word.

"Alas ! it is of no use, my beloved ! I see that you are doing all you can. An hour ago I wanted to die ; now I do not. Gwynplaine—my adored Gwynplaine ! how happy we have been ! God placed you in my life, and He takes me out of yours. You see, I am going. You will remember the Green Box, won't you ; and poor blind little Dea ? You will remember my song ? Do not forget the sound of my voice, and the way in which I said, 'I love you !' I will come back and tell it to you again, in the night while you are asleep. Yes, we found each other again ; but it was too much joy. It was to end at once. It is decreed that I

am to go first. I love my father, Ursus, and my brother, Homo very dearly. You are all so good. There is no air here. Open the window. My Gwynplaine, I did not tell you, but I was jealous of a woman who came one day. You do not even know of whom I speak. Is it not so? Cover my arms, I am rather cold. And Fibi and Vinus, where are they? One comes to love everybody. One feels a friendship for all those who have been mixed up in one's happiness. We have a kindly feeling towards them for having been present in our joys. Why has it all passed away? I have not clearly understood what has happened during the last two days. Now I am dying. Leave me in my dress. When I put it on I foresaw that it would be my shroud. I wish to keep it on. Gwynplaine's kisses are upon it. Oh, what would I not have given to have lived on! What a happy life we led in our poor caravan! How we sang! How I listened to the applause! What joy it was never to be separated from each other! It seemed to me that I was living in a cloud with you: I knew one day from another, although I was blind. I knew that it was morning, because I heard Gwynplaine; I felt that it was night, because I dreamed of Gwynplaine; I felt that I was wrapped up in something, which was his soul. We adored each other so sweetly. It is all fading away; and there will be no more songs. Alas! that I cannot live on! You will think of me, my beloved!"

Her voice was growing fainter. The ominous waning, which was death, was stealing away her breath. She folded her thumbs within her fingers, a sign that her last moments were approaching. It seemed as though the first uncertain words of an angel just created, was blended with the last failing accents of a dying girl.

She murmured,—

"You will think of me, won't you? It would be very sad to be dead, and to be remembered by no one. I have been wayward at times; I beg pardon of you all. I am sure that, if God had so willed it, we might yet have been happy, my Gwynplaine; for we take up but very little room, and we might have earned our bread together in another land. But God has willed it otherwise. I cannot make out in the least why I am dying. I never complained of being blind, so that I cannot have offended anyone. I should

never have asked for anything, but always to be blind as I was, by your side. Oh, how sad it is to have to part!"

Her words were more and more inarticulate evaporating into each other, as if they were being blown away. She had become almost inaudible.

"Gwynplaine," she resumed, "you will think of me, won't you? I shall crave it when I am dead."

And she added,—

"Oh, keep me with you!"

Then after a pause, she said,—

"Come to me as soon as you can. I shall be very unhappy without you, even in heaven. Do not leave me long alone, my sweet Gwynplaine! My Paradise was here. Above there is only heaven! Oh! I cannot breathe! My beloved! My beloved! My beloved!"

"Mercy!" cried Gwynplaine.

"Farewell!" murmured Dea.

And he pressed his mouth to her beautiful icy hands. For a moment it seemed as if she had ceased to breathe. Then she raised herself on her elbows, and an intense splendor flashed across her eyes, and through an ineffable smile her voice rang out clearly,

"Light!" she cried. "I see!"

And she expired. She fell back rigid and motionless on the mattress.

"Dead!" said Ursus.

And the poor old man, as if crushed by his despair, bowed his bald head and buried his swollen face in the folds of the gown which covered Dea's feet. He lay there in a swoon.

Then Gwynplaine became awful. He arose, lifted his eyes, and gazed into the vast gloom above him. Seen by none on earth, but looked down upon, perhaps, as he stood in the darkness, by some invisible presence, he stretched his hands on high, and said,—

"I come!"

And he strode across the deck, towards the side of the vessel as if beckoned by a vision.

A few paces off was the abyss. He walked slowly, never casting down his eyes. A smile came upon his face, such as Dea's had just worn. He advanced straight before him, as if watching something. In his eyes was a light like the reflection of a soul perceived from afar off. He cried out, "Yes?" At every step he was approaching nearer to the side of the vessel. His gait was rigid, his arms were lifted up, his head was thrown back, his

eyeballs fixed. His movement was ghost-like. He advanced without haste, and without hesitation, with fatal precision, as though there were before him no yawning gulf and open grave. He murmured:—"Be easy. I follow you. I understand the sign that you are making me." His eyes were fixed upon a certain spot in the sky, where the shadow was deepest. The smile was still upon his face. The sky was perfectly black; there was no star visible in it, and yet he evidently saw one. He crossed the deck. A few stiff and ominous steps, and he had reached the very edge.

"I come," said he; "Dea, behold I come!"

One step more, there was no bulwark; the void was before him; he strode into it. He fell. The night was thick and dull, the water deep. It swallowed him up. He disappeared calmly and silently. None saw nor heard him. The ship sailed on, and the river flowed.

Shortly afterward the ship reached the sea.

When Ursus returned to consciousness, he found Gwynplaine no longer with him, and he saw Homo by the edge of the deck baying in the shadow and looking down upon the water.













